1

SECRETS AND STORIES OF THE WAR

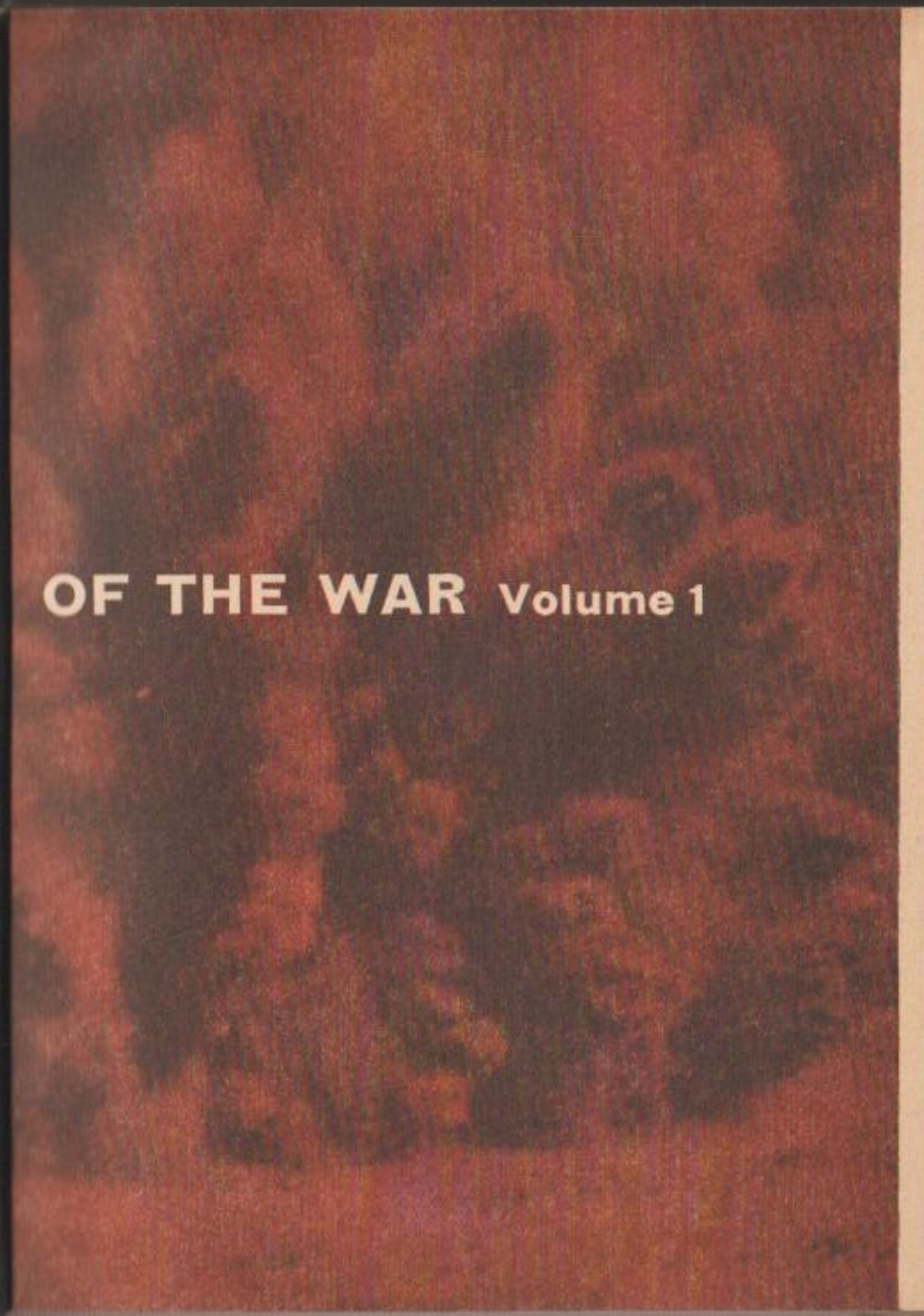
Z 00

SECRETS AND
STORIES
OF
THE WAR

SECRETS AND STORIES OF THE WAR Volume 1

A selection of the articles and
book condensations in which
The Reader's Digest
recorded the Second World War

Foreword by Lieutenant-General Sir Brian Horrocks, KCB., KBE., DSO., MC., LL.D (Hon)



Published by
THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION LIMITED
25 Berkeley Square, London, W.1

THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION PTY. LIMITED
Reader's Digest House, 86 Stanley Street, East Sydney

THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION (CANADA) LIMITED
215 Redfern Avenue, Montreal 6, Quebec

THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Parkade, Strand Street, Cape Town

© 1963 THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION LIMITED

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book or parts thereof in any form.
For additional copyright information see page 720

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
HAZELL WATSON & VINEY LTD., AYLESBURY, BUCKS

Contents

VOLUME I

FOREWORD—THE NEWS THAT BECAME HISTORY 9
Lieutenant-General Sir Brian Horrocks

HITLER ON THE MARCH 20
William L. Shirer

'TAKE COVER!' AN AIR RAID WARDEN REMEMBERS 38
George Graham

THE ENEMY'S MASTERPIECE OF ESPIONAGE 51
J. Edgar Hoover

THE CRUISE OF THE RAIDER ATLANTIS 58
Robert Littell

THE SIEGE OF FORT EBEN EMAEL 65
Lieutenant-Colonel Paul W. Thompson

THE LAST ENEMY 70
Richard Hillary

MISS VICTORIA 94
Patricia Strauss

THE PRISONERS OF DIFFERDANGE 98
Edwin Muller

MIRACLE AT DUNKIRK 105
Arthur Divine

HERO WHEN HE HAD TO BE 118
Edwin Muller

GIRAUD'S BRILLIANT ESCAPE FROM A NAZI PRISON 125
Frederick Painton

HOW BRITAIN'S WEALTH WENT WEST 130
Leland Stowe

SHEPHERDS OF THE UNDERGROUND 142
George Kent

THE FROGMAN WHO CRIPPLED A FLEET 148
J. D. Ratcliff

THE MAN WHO DID BUSINESS WITH HIMMLER 154
Edwin Muller

THE HUNTING OF THE BISMARCK 159
Captain Russell Grenfell, RN

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER 178
Quentin Reynolds

THE CASE OF THE SEASICK STOKER 184
John Rhodes Sturdy

TWO MEN AND AN ARMY 189
Allan Michie

THE GIRL WHO WAS ANNE FRANK 201
Louis de Jong

BLUEPRINT FOR PEARL HARBOUR 208
Edwin Muller

THE INFAMOUS SEVENTH OF DECEMBER 212
Blake Clark

THE PASSWORD WAS MANDALAY 227
Lieutenant-Colonel James Warner Bellah

SECRET MISSION TO NORTH AFRICA 232
Frederick Painton

ELEVEN AGAINST THE NAZI A-BOMB 241
Frederic Sondern

A DAY OF SWEEPING MINES OFF DOVER 249
William L. White

THE HUNT FOR A SPY 254
Carl Wall

DEATH IN THE LIFEBOAT 259
Walter Gibson

JOEY'S QUIET WAR 268
Thomas Johnson

WHAT THEY CALL BRAVERY 273
Carl Wall

TUNNEL TO FREEDOM 279
Paul Brickhill and Allan Michie

THE SHORT, SHARP BATTLE OF KELIBIA POINT 302
George Palmer and Frederic Sondern

THE SAVAGE RECRUITS FROM BURMA 307
Ralph Henderson

WHEN HITLER INVADED AMERICA 317
Lawrence Elliott

SCARLET PIMPERNELS OF THE AIR 328
Allan Michie

THE SILENT, INVISIBLE WAR UNDER THE SEA 333
Ira Wolfert

I WAS MONTY'S DOUBLE 345
M. E. Clifton James

THE NEWS THAT BECAME HISTORY

By Lieutenant-General Sir Brian Horrocks

MY FIRST sight of war was during the retreat from Mons in August 1914; my last was on the Cuxhaven peninsular, north of Bremen, in May 1945. Thirty-one years, 300 miles and a strange difference in attitudes separated those incidents.

During the Battle of the Aisne in 1914 I stood on a hill watching a mass of cavalry in the distance. A gunner observation officer at my side asked me whether they were French or German. My military education had not, up to then, included a study of foreign uniforms; I thought they were Germans, but I wasn't sure. "Well," he said, "it's too good a target to miss"—and very soon shells were scattering the horsemen.

Thirty-one years later my 30 Corps was mopping up the German forces round Cuxhaven when I was given the top-secret news that the enemy was negotiating for surrender. I spent the last few hours of my active command discreetly trying to prevent any more casualties, persuading my divisional commanders not to be too venturesome and to keep out of trouble. I could see them looking at me with astonishment, no doubt thinking "the old man's lost his nerve at last."

These incidents express a great difference between the First and Second World Wars. In the first, the casualties were ghastly; during the first day of the Battle of the Somme in July 1916, our casualties were well over 50,000, and the gains were negligible. (In those days

the life of a subaltern was reckoned to be three weeks. I was lucky; I lasted six before I was wounded and taken prisoner.)

During the second war most commanders had vivid memories of this carnage, and we were always seeking ways to protect the infantry with tanks and covering fire. We were accused of wasting ammunition; of pouring down shells haphazardly before an attack. Quite so; it was better to waste a ton of ammunition than chance one man's life.

If a general had imagination (and I always thought I had a bit too much), the responsibility for lives was agonizing. I remember being asked during the Reichswald Battle whether I wanted the town of Cleve "taken out." Cleve was a lovely old Rhineland town—where Anne of Cleves, Henry VIII's fourth wife, was born—and it had a large civilian population; "taken out" meant razed. But I knew that the town was astride the only enemy supply route; it was our lives or theirs. So Cleve was "taken out."

This sort of situation cannot be avoided in war, and it makes command such a horrible business. In the higher realms of strategy there may well be less personal involvement, because men tend to become statistics. I am no strategist, and as a corps commander I lived beside the men who were actually doing the fighting. But I must admit that, agonizing though it was, I wouldn't have chosen any other way of living through the war.

This is probably why I have so much enjoyed reading the articles in this book. They deal with the war as I understood it. The people on these pages are men I might have known, not just heads at a roll-call; the battles are those I might have fought, not just ploys on the chess-board of war.

There are many stories here of men who came from nowhere to be heroes, like the sailors and boatmen who got us out of Dunkirk, and Richard Hillary, one of the first of the Few. As a professional soldier I was fascinated to watch the impact of war on men such as these. "Bullets change everything" is a truism we quickly learned.

We discovered that the loud-voiced NCO who had bounced round the peace-time barrack square was not always quite so evident when the bullets began to fly, and in his place emerged some quiet little fellow whose natural authority suddenly appeared when the battle was fiercest.

The forward area of a battlefield, whether it's on land, sea or in the air, is the most exclusive club in the world, and it's there that wars are won by ordinary down-to-earth people, sleepless and bored, slogging through cold and rain. Oddly, you always see the same people up at the front, and they seem comparatively few. I remember arriving to take command of 30 Corps in Normandy and spotting countless friendly, familiar faces I knew from the desert campaign jutting out of tank turrets. I commented on this to one of my staff officers. "General," he said, "you always meet the same people battle-fighting."

I count myself lucky to have been battle-fighting with so many fine Commonwealth units. The first time I fought with Canadian troops was during the Reichswald Battle—and there they earned two VC's! And I have many happy memories of co-operation with the South Africans, the New Zealanders and those tough Australians. After Alamein I congratulated General Morshead on a magnificent piece of fighting by his Australian division. "Thank you, General," he said. "The boys were interested." That's the sort of man you meet at the "sharp end" of a battle.

To make a large generalization I would say that in an average group of ten fighting men, two are leaders, seven follow and one would much rather not be there at all. This book has many stories about the very brave men who went out on special missions—the spies and saboteurs, and the irregulars like Paddy Leigh-Fermor, who kidnapped General Kreipe from Crete, and David Stirling, who drove round the Egyptian desert blasting the Germans from a jeep. As a corps commander I was always a little alarmed when men were asked to volunteer for such cloak-and-dagger affairs. For these

special jobs were done at the expense of my corps' efficiency; the volunteers were always the men who would have been the natural leaders in the battles we were fighting.

It is an interesting fact that this irregular warfare was almost entirely a speciality of the Allies. This book recounts the weird story of one German attempt at playing this game, "When Hitler Invaded America." It was a singularly unsuccessful venture, while our war archives recall countless hair-raising schemes that worked. This suggests, I suppose, a difference in national outlooks. The Germans, with their superb discipline and respect for order, just didn't understand free-booting; men from the Allied countries, with their love of freedom and individualism, were more often prepared to take on unorthodox, lone-wolf adventures.

It has been argued, with some justification, that there were too many irregular private armies operating behind the enemy lines. But considering the small cost of their upkeep I am sure they made a worthwhile contribution, particularly in Burma.

For one thing, these activities had a marvellous effect on morale. The Chindits, operating miles behind the Japanese lines, and the American Rangers, who fought alongside near-savages of the Kachin tribe, did much to raise the spirits of the troops who were to fight the later and bigger battles over the same ground. Units such as these, often trained and led by Gurkhas and men of the British Frontier Force, proved that the Japanese could be beaten at their own game of jungle warfare.

The war in the Far East was very different from the operations in the desert and Europe. It offered little scope for tactical skill in command, and it was rarely possible to co-ordinate large numbers of men and weapons on a wide front, as happened in the more "civilized" war that I took part in. The problems facing men like Mountbatten and Slim were how to accustom westerners to an enemy who had an Asiatic disregard for death, and how to keep up the morale of their men. It was one of the most notable feats of

the war that somehow Australian, British and US troops overcame their misery and learned to endure the appalling conditions of the jungle.

We learned a lot about the techniques of raising spirits and boosting morale in the last war. My own aim was to see that the troops knew what they were doing; if the battle was explained to them, then they could always be relied upon to give of their best. And if they could be told as well that the navy had just sunk the *Scharnhorst* or given one of their other fearless displays, so much the better.

In war as in peace, the Press has a big part to play in promoting morale and I am glad to meet again on the pages of this book my good friends, the war correspondents.

In my corps, dealing with the Press was a two-way traffic. Soldiers like to know that their battles are properly and accurately reported, and I gave correspondents all the help I could, telling them quite frankly what was going on. But they were also able to help me. A corps commander couldn't be everywhere at once, but quite often the group of war correspondents that came to my headquarters in the evening had, between them, a complete picture of what was going on all along the front. I would ask them what they thought about the situation. "Well, General," one of them might say, "so-and-so division is getting very tired." Or "I think you may have to watch such-and-such formation for this reason or that." Then I would go and have a look for myself and find, perhaps, that these units had seen so much fighting that it would be wise to withdraw them from the front for a few days.

The war was very well reported, and I am delighted to see that this book includes many of those stirring eye-witness reports that were telephoned and cabled from the front-lines by such men as Allan Michie and Quentin Reynolds. With hindsight we know that they were often too close to the subject to give a complete picture of what was going on, and we are now able to put the news that became history into perspective. But there is the smell of battle about these

reports and a much more potent reminder of the war I knew than has since been produced by the arm-chair war historians.

When I look back on those years, I am often horrified at the magnitude of the task we undertook in 1939. What fantastic good fortune it was that German tanks didn't follow us down to the beaches at Dunkirk! What a debt we owe the British, Canadian and US Navies who somehow kept the Atlantic supply routes open!

It seems to me now that Germany could have won the war but for Hitler. Frederic Sondern describes "The Last Days of Adolf Hitler" in this book and tells how, even when the Fuehrer had been revealed as a madman, his authority was complete. This was the fascination of that evil man.

Take, for instance, his control over the German General Staff. Here was an extremely efficient and completely self-contained autocracy—a class that ruled by divine right. Yet Hitler had them absolutely cowed. In dozens of cases the Fuehrer took military decisions against their advice, and was proved wrong. He tried to fight tactical battles from a remote headquarters (an impossible thing to do, as Rommel well knew); his intervention during the Battle of Stalingrad, a turning-point of the war, cost the Germans fearful losses from which they never really recovered; his handling of the defence of German-occupied Europe was time and again against the better judgment of his army commanders. . . . And yet, right to the end, they went on doing just what they were told.

Clearly Hitler's biggest mistake was on the Russian front. When his armies marched east they were welcomed by the Russian peasants, who had had enough of Stalin and his collectivization programme. Many Russians laid down their arms and volunteered for the German army, and many fought and died on the Axis side.

The fighting troops went on towards Moscow. But when they retreated over the same ground they were hated and harried. Why? It was because Hitler's political troops had been there in the meantime, carting off men to the slave labour camps and practising

the most odious barbarities of the Nazi regime. If the war in the east had been left to the forward troops, I honestly believe that the Russian front would have crumbled.

Thank God it didn't. In fact the crumbling that I saw was, surprisingly, on the Nazi side. This was one of the enigmas of the war. When they were fighting set-piece battles, the Germans were superb, but once the command structure had been destroyed they were beaten. When, to our astonishment, enemy resistance in North Africa suddenly collapsed, our great problem was how to handle the huge number of prisoners that came pouring in. Whole units surrendered unexpectedly, even though they had plenty of food and ammunition. The point was that they were without leaders.

It was the same in the German homeland. We entered towns to find white sheets flapping from every window. I often used to wonder what would have happened if my corps had been a German one advancing through Kent. I am quite sure that there would have been Home Guards fighting with a variety of weapons at every crossroads, and the British housewives would have been much more likely to have had pitchforks in their hands than white flags.

This German reaction to defeat is all the more surprising when one remembers just how stoically the people bore the endless Allied bombing that reduced whole cities to rubble.

There is a report by Allan Michie in this book describing how, towards the end of the war, enemy production was brought to a standstill through the day and night attention of Allied bombers. We know now that the bombing offensive was nothing like as effective in the early years of the war as we—and Michie—thought at the time. This was mainly because the German people, under forceful leadership, proved calmer, more stoical and much more determined than we had thought possible.

But in my view the continuous Allied strategic air offensive was the most important operation of the war. Apart from the devastation caused, its effect on Allied morale was great. And, of course,

our non-stop offensive tended to shift air warfare from Britain to Germany so that enemy fighter planes became increasingly involved in defensive operations over their own country rather than in offensive raids. As a result our tactical air forces had established virtual air supremacy over the battlefields by the spring of 1943, and this must have shortened the war by several years.

We front-line troops were well aware of the way the war in the air was going. For instance, after the capture of Tunis on 7th May 1943, secure in the knowledge that the German Air Force had been driven from the African skies, I was able to order the 6th Armoured Division to seal off the remnants of the enemy formations in the Cape Bon peninsular, with our vehicles moving nose to tail and two abreast—a highly dangerous undertaking if there had been any enemy aircraft about.

Nor shall I ever forget my first sight of the Normandy beaches at the beginning of August 1944. From the air the area just behind the beaches looked like a dusty ant-heap, with stores, troops and vehicles moving about in every direction. And all the time Allied aircraft were taking off and landing on strips that had been hewn out of the Normandy countryside. But for our complete domination of the air we would never have dared to risk such concentrations of men and materials. The air power at our command made it almost impossible for German reinforcements to move into Normandy by day, and I am firmly convinced that the airmen did more to defeat the German armies than any action that was fought on the ground.

At some time or another, almost every front-line soldier begins to wonder, "Is nobody else fighting this war?" But, as the years passed, there were constant reminders of the marvellous spirit among the varying services and Allies. Very few of us will forget the evacuation from Crete, early on in the war, when the navy's losses were so large as to threaten the whole balance of power in the Mediterranean. Field-Marshal Wavell felt he could not expect the navy to continue the operation, but Admiral Cunningham insisted.

"If the navy puts the army ashore," he said, "they must be prepared to take them off." A good many men owe their lives to that decision and the sailors who carried it out.

As the breakout from Normandy gathered momentum we soldiers discovered that we had other friends—the underground fighters of Europe. On 26th August 1944, when I was ordered to advance with 30 Corps from the Seine to Brussels, Montgomery impressed on me that speed was essential in order to prevent the Germans from organizing defensive positions on the Somme or on any of the other waterways that stretched across our path.

We covered 250 miles in six days against scattered German defences. Our speed was maintained largely because of the men of the Resistance, whose stories are given their rightful place in this book. Everywhere they leaped into action as we approached, taking over the prisoners, providing guides, guarding bridges and vulnerable points. On a later occasion, during the Battle of Arnhem, the fire of my whole corps artillery was at one point controlled by a Dutch Resistance worker operating a wireless set and observing enemy movements from an attic window behind the German lines.

The war was many things to many men. A group with whom I had every sympathy were the prisoners of war. Their plight was one with which I am all too familiar, as I spent four years trying to escape from German camps during the First World War. I even took part in several attempts to tunnel to freedom, though none of them were as ambitious as the break-out from Stalag Luft III, which Paul Brickhill describes in this book. I can remember to this day my bitter disappointment at being recaptured by German frontier guards within 500 yards of Holland after covering 200 miles by myself across Germany from a POW camp in the Hartz mountains.

Looking back now I realize that the real importance lay not in whether we actually succeeded in our attempts to escape or not, but in the fact that for four years our lives were devoted to one thing only—how to outwit the Germans and escape—with the result

that we returned home after the war having suffered little ill effect from our time in prison. Others, who allowed themselves to sink into despondency, deteriorated physically and mentally almost day by day, and many of them have never recovered since.

All the rubble and destruction of the war put together does not promote in our minds the sympathy we feel for just one man destroyed in this way. But there are many men who came out of the war bigger and better people than when they went in. The years 1939 to 1945 were loathsome ones, but there can be few of us who do not have a memory of fine people encountered or moments of comradeship shared during that time. Now we can feel again a stir of pride and a sense of wonderment at the selfless heroism and devotion shown by the men—and women—whose stories are told in this book.

Brian G. Horrocks

Sir Brian Horrocks, seen here talking to troops of the 52nd Scottish Lowland Division after the capture of Bremen, was one of the outstanding corps commanders of the last war. He led 13 Corps, 10 Corps and 9 Corps in Africa, and, after recovering from wounds received when he was strafed by a low-flying German fighter at Bizerta, he commanded 30 Corps of the British Liberation Army in Europe.

Between the wars, Sir Brian fought for the White Russian armies against the Bolsheviks in Siberia, and was for a time Chief Instructor at the Staff College, Camberley. In 1924 he represented Britain in the modern pentathlon event of the Olympic Games in Paris.

Sir Brian retired from the army in 1949 and for the next fourteen years was Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, the official responsible to the Queen for the smooth running of the House of Lords. He is well-known to television audiences in Britain, Canada and Australia for his programmes on military history.

Numb. 34665 6047

THIRD SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette

Of FRIDAY, the 1st of SEPTEMBER, 1939

Published by Authority

Registered as a newspaper

SUNDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER, 1939

Privy Council Office,
3rd September, 1939.

IT IS NOTIFIED THAT A STATE OF WAR EXISTS BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY AND GERMANY AS FROM 11 O'CLOCK A.M. TO-DAY, THE 3RD SEPTEMBER, 1939.

On the instructions of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin addressed on 1st September a communication to the German Government in the following terms :—

"Early this morning the German Chancellor issued a proclamation to the German Army which indicated clearly that he was about to attack Poland.

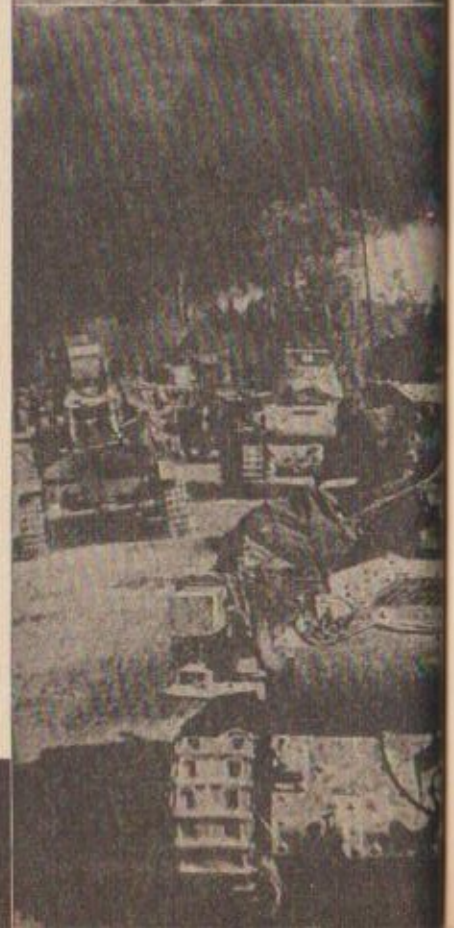
"Information which has reached His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the French Government indicates that German troops have crossed the Polish frontier and that attacks upon Polish towns are proceeding.

"In these circumstances it appears to the Governments of the United Kingdom and France that by their action the German Government have created conditions (viz., an aggressive act of force against Poland threatening the independence of Poland) which call for the implementation by the Governments of the United Kingdom and France of the undertaking to Poland to come to her assistance.

"I am accordingly to inform Your Excellency that unless the German Government are prepared to give His Majesty's Government satisfactory assurances that the German Government has suspended all aggressive action against Poland and are prepared promptly to withdraw their forces from Polish territory, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will, without hesitation, fulfil their obligations to Poland."

At 9 a.m. on 3rd September His Majesty's Ambassador in Berlin addressed a communication to the German Government in the following terms :—

"In the communication which I had the honour to make to you on 1st September I informed you, on the instructions of His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that unless the German Government were prepared to give His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom satisfactory assurances that the German Government had



The beat of goose-stepping jackboots and the rumble of tanks are heard in Europe . . . and Britain announces "that a State of War exists between His Majesty and Germany as from 11 o'clock a.m. today, the 3rd September, 1939"

Hitler On The March

By William L. Shirer

AT DAYBREAK on 1st September 1939, on a flimsy, invented pretext, German armies poured across the Polish frontier and converged on Warsaw from the north, south and west.

In Berlin, the people in the streets were apathetic, despite the immensity of the news which greeted them in the morning newspapers. Perhaps they were simply dazed at waking up to find themselves in a war which they had been sure the Fuehrer would somehow avoid. Even the robot members of the Reichstag, hacks whom Hitler had appointed, failed to respond with much enthusiasm as the dictator launched into his explanation of why Germany found itself at war. There was far less cheering than on previous and less important occasions. Hitler seemed strangely on the defensive, and throughout the speech ran a curious strain, as though he himself were dazed at the fix he had got himself into and felt a little desperate about it.

But now there was no way out. On 3rd September, Britain and France declared war on Germany. That same night, at 9 p.m., the German submarine U-30 torpedoed and sank the British liner *Athenia* some 200 miles west of the Hebrides; 112 passengers lost their lives. . . . The war had begun.

Brave and valiant and foolhardy though the Poles were—at one point they actually counter-attacked Nazi tanks with cavalry—they were simply overwhelmed by the German onslaught. This

was their, and the world's, first experience of the *blitzkrieg*, the sudden surprise attack—the fighter planes and bombers roaring overhead, spreading flame and terror; the Stukas' whining screams as they dived; the tanks, whole divisions of them, breaking through and thrusting forward thirty or forty miles in a day; and the incredible speed of even the infantry, indeed of the whole vast army of a million and a half men on motorized wheels, co-ordinated through a maze of electronic communications. This was a mechanized juggernaut such as the earth had never seen.

Within forty-eight hours the Polish Air Force was destroyed and in one week the Polish Army was vanquished, most of its thirty-five divisions either shattered or caught in a pincer movement that closed on Warsaw.

By 17th September all the Polish forces, except a mere handful on the Russian border, were surrounded. All was over except the dying in the broken ranks of Polish units which still, with incredible fortitude, held out.

IT WAS NOW time for the Russians, Germany's partners in a cynical non-aggression pact, to move in on the stricken country to grab a share of the spoils.

The Kremlin, like every other seat of government, had been taken by surprise at the rapidity with which the German armies had hurtled through Poland. Their success was most embarrassing to the Russians. On what pretext could they now intervene against the fallen state?

On 17th September there was disagreement between the two unnatural partners over the text of a joint communiqué which would "justify" the Russo-German destruction of Poland. Stalin objected to the German version because "it presented the facts all too frankly." Whereupon he wrote out his own version, a masterpiece of subterfuge, and forced the Germans to accept it. It stated that the joint aim of Germany and Russia was "to restore peace and order in Poland, which has been destroyed by the disintegration

of the Polish state, and to help the Polish people to establish new conditions for its political life." On that shabby pretext, beginning on the morning of 17th September, Russia trampled over a prostrate Poland. The next day Soviet troops met the Germans at Brest-Litovsk.

So Poland, like Austria and Czechoslovakia before it, disappeared from the map of Europe.

Now Hitler turned his attention to the Western Front.

Nothing much had happened there. Hardly a shot had been fired. The German man in the street was beginning to call it the "sit-down war"—*sitzkrieg*. In the west it would soon be dubbed the "phoney war". Here was the French Army, "the strongest in the world," as Britain's General J. F. C. Fuller put it, "facing no more than twenty-six German divisions, sitting still and sheltering behind steel and concrete while a quixotically valiant ally was being exterminated!"

For the West, the inaction was costly. As General Halder said at Nuremberg, "The success against Poland was only made possible by almost completely baring our western border. The French would have been able to cross the Rhine without our being able to prevent it." Why then did not the French Army, which had overwhelming superiority over the German forces in the west, attack, as General Gamelin and the French Government had promised the Poles in writing it would?

There were many reasons: defeatism in the French High Command, the Government and the people; the memories of how France had been bled white in the First World War and a determination not to suffer such slaughter again if it could be avoided; the realization by mid-September that the Polish armies were so badly defeated that the Germans would soon be able to move superior forces to the west and therefore in all probability wipe out any initial French advances; and the increasing fear of German superiority in arms and in the air.

But now the opportunity for any effective offensive had been

lost. With the Polish armies destroyed, Hitler could turn his full attention, and the bulk of his forces, to the west. Against the advice of his generals, who wanted time to refit the tanks used in Poland, the Fuehrer issued directive No. 6 for the conduct of the war:

TOP SECRET

Preparations are to be made for an attack through Luxembourg, Belgium and Holland at as early a date as possible.

IN THE MEANTIME, plans for a daring German assault on two other little neutral states farther to the north had been ripening in Berlin and now took priority. The phoney war, so far as the Germans were concerned, was coming to an end with the approach of spring.

The innocent-sounding code name for the latest plan of German aggression was *Weseruebung*: or "Weser Exercise." It was the brain-child of the navy, which had long had its eyes on the north. Since Germany had no direct access to the wide ocean, the naval officers felt they needed bases in Norway to forestall a British blockade (which during the First World War had effectively bottled up the German Navy in the North Sea). Such bases would be vitally useful in protecting vessels carrying shipments of Swedish iron-ore, on which Germany's very existence depended.

It was concern for Germany's supplies of Swedish iron-ore that persuaded Hitler to adopt the plan. On 1st March he issued the formal directive for Weser Exercise. Denmark had now definitely been added to the list of Hitler's victims; the air force had its eyes on bases there to be used against Britain.

Weseruebung was ordered to begin at 5.15 a.m. on 9th April 1940. At precisely an hour before dawn on that day, the German envoys in Copenhagen and Oslo presented to the Danish and Norwegian Governments a German ultimatum demanding that they accept on the instant, and without resistance, the "protection of the Reich." The ultimatum was possibly the most brazen document so far

composed by the Fuehrer and Ribbentrop, his Foreign Minister.

The Danes were in a hopeless position. Their pleasant, flat little country was incapable of defence against Hitler's panzers. The army fought a few skirmishes, but by the time the Danes had finished their breakfasts, it was all over. The king, on the advice of his government, capitulated and ordered resistance to cease.

But in Norway things were different. Although by noon on the first day of operations the five principal towns and ports and the one big airfield along the west and south coasts were in German hands, King Haakon refused to give up.

Driven into exile from his capital, pressed to surrender and approve a government headed by the pro-Nazi traitor Vidkun Quisling, Haakon assembled the members of the government and told them: "I cannot accept the German demands. If the government should decide to accept them, abdication will be the only course open to me."

The government, though there may have been some waverers, could not be less courageous than the king, and it quickly rallied behind him.

That evening from a feeble little rural radio station, the only available means of communication with the outside world, the Norwegian Government flung down the gauntlet to the mighty Third Reich and called upon the people to resist the invaders. There were only three million of them—but there was now hope that British troops might arrive to help them.

Britain had prepared a small expeditionary force for Norway, but was unaccountably slow in getting troops under way. By late April the southern half of Norway, comprising all the main towns, had been irretrievably lost. But northern Norway seemed secure. By 28th May an Allied force of 25,000 men had driven the Germans out of Narvik. There seemed no reason to doubt that Hitler would be deprived of both his iron-ore and his objective of occupying the whole of Norway.

But when the Wehrmacht struck with stunning force on the

Western Front, every Allied soldier was needed to plug the gap. Narvik was abandoned, the Allied troops were hastily re-embarked, and King Haakon and his government transported to London.

Despite his amazing successes the Fuehrer had his bad moments during the Norwegian campaign. General Jodl's diary is crammed with terse entries recounting a succession of the warlord's nervous crises. Hitler had a fit of hysteria about the loss of Narvik, and for the first time the Wehrmacht commanders had a foretaste of how their demonic Fuehrer cracked under the strain of even minor setbacks in battle. It was a weakness which would grow on him when, after a series of further astonishing military successes, the tide of war changed, and it would contribute mightily to the eventual débâcle of the Third Reich.

Still, the quick conquest of Denmark and Norway had been an important victory. It secured the winter iron-ore route, brought Hitler air bases hundreds of miles closer to the main enemy and, perhaps most important of all, it immensely enhanced the military prestige of the Third Reich. Nazi Germany seemed invincible.

But there was one military result of the Scandinavian adventure which could not be evaluated at once. German naval losses were heavy: ten out of twenty destroyers, three out of eight cruisers, plus two battle cruisers and a pocket battleship were damaged so severely that they were out of action for several months. Hitler had no fleet worthy of mention when the time to invade Britain came, as it did shortly, and this proved an insurmountable handicap.

The possible consequences of the crippling of the German Navy did not enter the Fuehrer's thoughts, however, as, at the beginning of May, he worked with his generals on the last-minute preparations for what they were confident would be the greatest conquest of all.

SHORTLY after dawn on 10th May 1940, the Belgian Ambassador and the Minister of the Netherlands in Berlin were informed that German troops were entering their countries "to safeguard their neutrality against an imminent attack by the Anglo-French armies"

—the same hollow excuse that had been made only a month before with Denmark and Norway. A formal German ultimatum called upon the two governments to see to it that no resistance was offered; if it were, it would be crushed.

Britain and France were caught napping; London was preoccupied with a Cabinet crisis which was resolved only on the evening of 10th May with the replacement of Chamberlain by Churchill as Prime Minister. Nevertheless, the Allied plan to meet the German attack in Belgium went ahead for the first couple of days almost without a hitch. A great Anglo-French army rushed north-eastward to man the main Belgian defence line along the Dyle and Meuse rivers. As it happened, this was just what the German High Command wanted. Though the Anglo-French armies did not know it, they sped directly into a trap that, when sprung, would prove utterly disastrous.

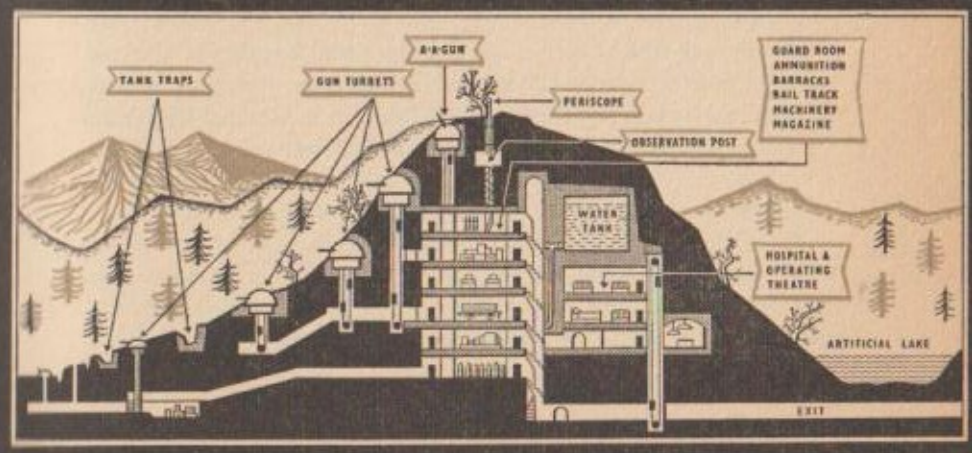
As the battle began, the two sides were evenly matched in numbers—136 German divisions against 135 divisions of the British, French, Belgians and Dutch. The defenders had the advantage of vast defensive fortifications—the impenetrable Maginot Line in the south, the Belgian forts in the middle, and fortified water lines in Holland in the north. Even in the number of tanks, the Allies matched the Germans. But they had not concentrated them as had the latter and, because of the Dutch and Belgians' suicidal pre-war policy of strict neutrality, there had been no staff consultations which would have enabled the defenders to pool their resources to the best advantage.

The Germans had a unified command, the initiative of the attacker, a contagious confidence in themselves and a daring plan. This was to launch the main German assault in the centre, through the Ardennes, with a massive armoured force which would then cross the Meuse north of Sedan, break out into the open country and race to the Channel at Abbeville.

Such a strike would hit the Allies where they least expected it, since their generals probably, like most of the Germans, considered

A Belgian mother and her child set out to join the streams of refugees

With bombs away and machine-guns cocked, a Stuka dive-bomber screams into the attack



The Maginot Line was "impregnable"—so the German forces by-passed it

this hilly, wooded country unsuitable for tanks. A feint by the right wing of the German forces would bring both the British and French armies rushing pell-mell into Belgium. Then by cracking through the French at Sedan and heading west for the Channel, the Germans would trap the major Anglo-French forces and the Belgian Army.

It was a daring plan, not without its risks, as several generals emphasized. But by now Hitler, who considered himself a military genius, practically believed that it was his own idea (it had actually been proposed by a gifted and imaginative staff officer of relatively junior rank, against considerable opposition), and the Fuehrer's enthusiasm for it ensured its adoption.

The attack began along a front of 175 miles, from the North Sea to the Maginot Line. For the Germans everything went according to the book, or even better than the book. Hitler's generals were confounded by the lightning rapidity and the extent of their own victories. As for the Allied leaders, they were quickly paralysed by developments they had not faintly expected and could not—in the utter confusion that ensued—comprehend.

Seven divisions of tanks concentrated at one point, the weakest position in the western defences, were responsible for the big breakthrough. Other factors were the Stuka dive-bombers, and the parachutists and airborne troops who landed far behind the Allied lines or on top of their seemingly impregnable forts and wrought havoc.

By the time the Dutch surrendered on 14th May, the die was cast for Belgium, France and the British Expeditionary Force. Though it was only the fifth day of the attack, it was the fatal day. The previous evening the German armour had secured four bridgeheads across the River Meuse, captured Sedan and gravely threatened the centre of the Allied line and the pivot on which the flower of the British and French armies had wheeled into Belgium.

Winston Churchill himself, who had taken over as Prime Minister on the first day of battle, was dumbfounded. He was awakened at half-past seven on the morning of 15th May by a

telephone call from Paul Reynaud, the new French Premier, who told him in an excited voice, "We have been defeated! We are beaten!" Churchill refused to believe it. The great French Army vanquished in less than a week? It was impossible. "I did not comprehend," he wrote later, "the violence of the revolution effected since the last war by the incursion of a mass of fast-moving armour."

It was on 14th May that the avalanche began. An army of tanks, unprecedented in warfare for size, concentration, mobility and striking power, broke through the French armies and headed swiftly for the Channel, behind the Allied forces in Belgium. So enormous was the striking force that, when it started through the Ardennes forest from the German frontier on 10th May, it stretched in three columns back for 100 miles behind the Rhine.

Preceded by waves of Stuka dive-bombers, this phalanx of steel and fire could not be stopped by any means in the hands of the bewildered defenders. At Sedan two tank divisions poured across a pontoon bridge and struck towards the west. By evening of that day the German bridgehead was thirty miles wide and fifteen miles deep, and the French forces in the vital centre of the Allied line were shattered. The Franco-British armies to the north, and the twenty-two divisions of Belgians, were in dire danger of being cut off.

By the afternoon of 16th May German spearheads were sixty miles west of Sedan, rolling along the undefended open country. Nothing very much stood between them and Paris, or between them and the Channel. The French had no forces with which to stage a counter-attack. Though the panzer divisions received orders to do no more than proceed with "a reconnaissance in force," this was all they needed.

By the morning of 19th May, a mighty wedge of seven armoured divisions was only some fifty miles from the Channel. On the evening of 20th May, to the surprise of Hitler's headquarters, the 2nd Panzer Division reached Abbeville, at the mouth of the Somme. The Belgians, the British Expeditionary Force and three French

armies were trapped. By 24th May the British, French and Belgian armies in the north were compressed into a relatively small triangle, and there was no hope of breaking out. The only hope, and it seemed a slim one, was possible evacuation by sea from Dunkirk.

It was at this juncture that the German armour, now within sight of Dunkirk, and poised for the final kill, received a strange—and, to the soldiers in the field, inexplicable—order to halt their advance. It was the first of the German High Command's major mistakes of the war, and it provided a vital reprieve for the Allies, leading to the miracle of Dunkirk.

But it did not save the Belgians. Although his army fought magnificently, King Leopold surrendered, against the advice of his government, early in the morning of 28th May.

Despite this additional setback, the British were still determined to fight to the end.

Hitler and his generals did not dream that, right under their very noses, the maritime-minded British people could evacuate a third of a million men from the small battered port and the exposed beaches of Dunkirk.

It was not until 30th May that the German High Command woke up to what was happening. For four days Nazi communiqués had been reiterating that the encircled enemy army was doomed. Yet by dawn on 2nd June, only 4,000 British troops remained in the perimeter, protected by 100,000 French who now manned the defences. The British Army escaped—without its heavy arms and equipment, to be sure, but with the certainty that the men would live to fight another day.

Britain's obvious determination to fight on does not seem to have troubled Hitler's thoughts. He was sure they would see the light after he had finished off France, which he now proceeded to do. The morning after Dunkirk fell, on 5th June, the Germans launched a massive assault on the Somme and soon they were attacking in overwhelming strength along a 400-mile front across France. The French were doomed. Against 143 German divisions, they could

"I am from now on just the first soldier of the German Reich. I have once more put on that coat that was most sacred and dear to me. I will not take it off again until victory is secured, or I will not survive the outcome"

deploy only sixty-five, most of them second-rate, for the best units had been expended in Belgium.

In victorious confusion, the German troops surged across France like a tidal wave. On 10th June undefended Paris was occupied. On 16th June, Reynaud resigned and was replaced by Pétain, who next day asked for an armistice.

Hitler replied that he would first have to consult his ally, Mussolini. For this strutting warrior, after making sure that the French armies were hopelessly beaten, had, like a jackal, jumped into the war on 10th June, to try to get in on the spoils.

The Duce's campaign was ludicrous. By 18th June, when Hitler summoned his junior partner to Munich to discuss an armistice with France, some thirty-two Italian divisions, after a week of "fighting," had been unable to budge a scanty French force of six divisions, though the defenders were now threatened by assault in the rear from the Germans sweeping down the Rhône Valley.

Mussolini was unable even to get Hitler to agree to joint armistice negotiations with the French. The Fuehrer was not going to share his triumph with this Johnny-come-lately, and the Duce left Munich bitter and frustrated.

As a neutral correspondent, I followed the German Army into Paris that June, always the loveliest of months in that majestic capital, and on 19th June heard Hitler was going to lay down his armistice terms on the same spot where Germany had capitulated to France and her allies on 11th November 1918—in a little clearing in the woods at Compiègne. There the Nazi warlord would get his revenge, and the place itself would add to the sweetness of it.

Late on the afternoon of 19th June I drove there and found German army engineers pulling the old railway restaurant car, in which the First World War armistice had been signed, out to the tracks in the centre of the clearing, on the exact spot, they said, where it had stood at 5 a.m. on 11th November 1918.

On the afternoon of 21st June I stood by the edge of the forest at Compiègne to observe the latest and greatest of Hitler's triumphs. It was one of the loveliest summer days I ever remember in France. A warm June sun beat down on the stately trees, casting pleasant shadows on the wooded avenues leading to the little circular clearing. At 3.15 p.m. precisely, Hitler arrived in his big Mercedes.

"I observed his face," I wrote in my diary. "It was grave, solemn, yet brimming with revenge. There was also in it, as in his springy step, a note of the triumphant conqueror, the defier of the world. There was something else, a sort of scornful inner joy at being present at this great reversal of fate."

When he reached the little opening in the forest and his personal standard had been run up, his attention was attracted by a large granite block.

"Hitler, followed by others, walks slowly over to it (I am quoting my diary), steps up, and reads the inscription engraved, in French, in great high letters:

"HERE ON THE ELEVENTH OF NOVEMBER 1918 SUCCUMBED THE CRIMINAL PRIDE OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE—VANQUISHED BY THE FREE PEOPLES WHICH IT TRIED TO ENSLAVE.

"Hitler reads it and Goering reads it. I look for the expression on Hitler's face. I have seen that face many times at the great moments of his life. But today! It is afire with scorn, anger, hate, revenge, triumph.

"He steps off the monument and contrives to make even this gesture a masterpiece of contempt. He glances back at it, contemptuous, angry—angry, you almost feel, because he cannot wipe out the awful, provoking lettering with one sweep of his high Prussian boot. He glances slowly round the clearing, and now, as his eyes meet yours, you grasp the depth of his hatred. But there is triumph there, too—revengeful, triumphant hate. Suddenly, as though his face were not giving quite complete expression to his feelings, he throws his whole body into harmony with his mood. He swiftly snaps his hands on to his hips, arches his shoulders, and plants his feet wide apart. It is a magnificent gesture of defiance, of burning contempt for this place now and all that it has stood for in the twenty-two years since it witnessed the humbling of the German Empire."

Hitler and his party then entered the armistice railway carriage, the Fuehrer seating himself in the chair occupied by Foch in 1918. Five minutes later the French delegation arrived, headed by General Charles Huntziger. They looked shattered, but retained a tragic dignity. They had not been told that they would be led to this proud French shrine to undergo such a humiliation, and the shock was no doubt just what Hitler had calculated.

Hitler and his entourage left the railway carriage as soon as General Keitel had read the preamble to the armistice terms. The conditions were hard and merciless, and on the second day of the negotiations the French delegates continued to bicker and delay. Finally, at 6.30 p.m. Keitel issued an ultimatum. The French must accept or reject the German armistice terms within an hour. Within

the allotted time the French Government had capitulated. At 6.50 p.m. on 22nd June 1940, Huntziger and Keitel signed the treaty. France was now destined to become a German vassal.

A light rain began to fall as the delegates left the armistice carriage and drove away. Down the road through the woods you could see an unbroken line of refugees making their way home on weary feet, on bicycles, in carts, a few fortunate ones in old lorries. I walked out to the clearing. A gang of German army engineers had already started to move the railway carriage.

"Where to?" I asked.

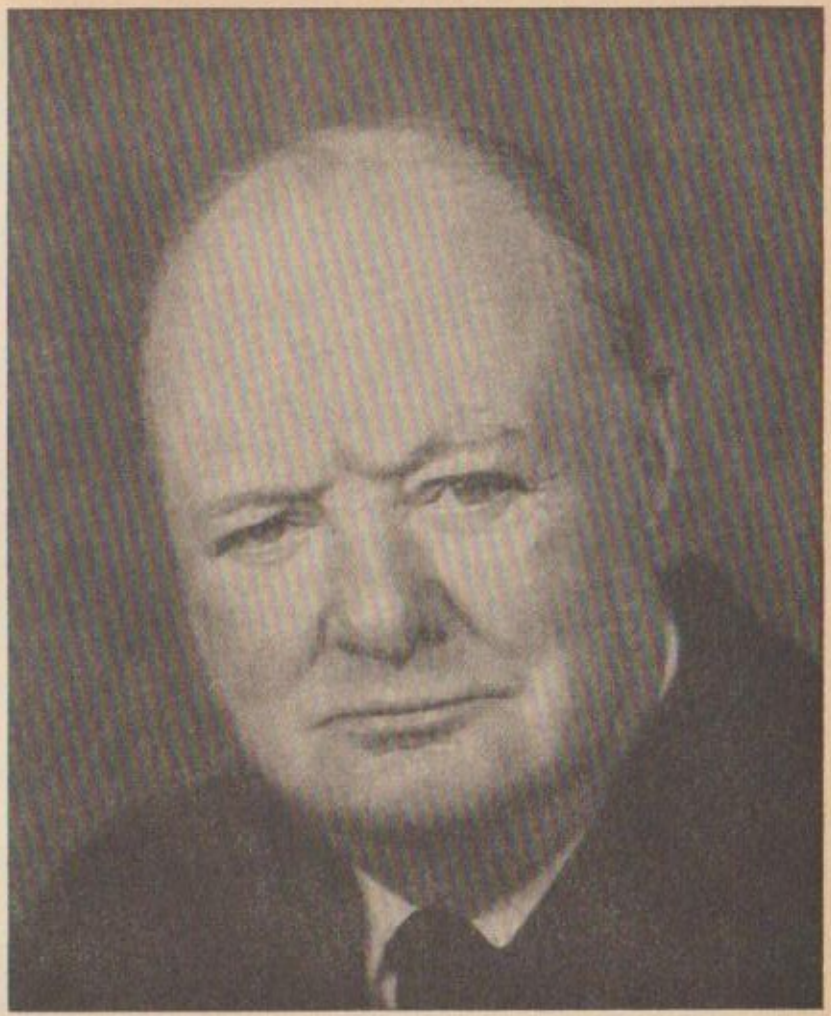
"To Berlin," they said.

The Franco-Italian armistice was signed in Rome two days later. Mussolini was able to occupy only what his troops had conquered, which meant a few hundred yards of French territory, and to impose a fifty-mile demilitarized zone opposite him in France and Tunisia. The armistice was signed at 7.35 p.m. on 24th June. Six hours later the guns in France lapsed into silence.

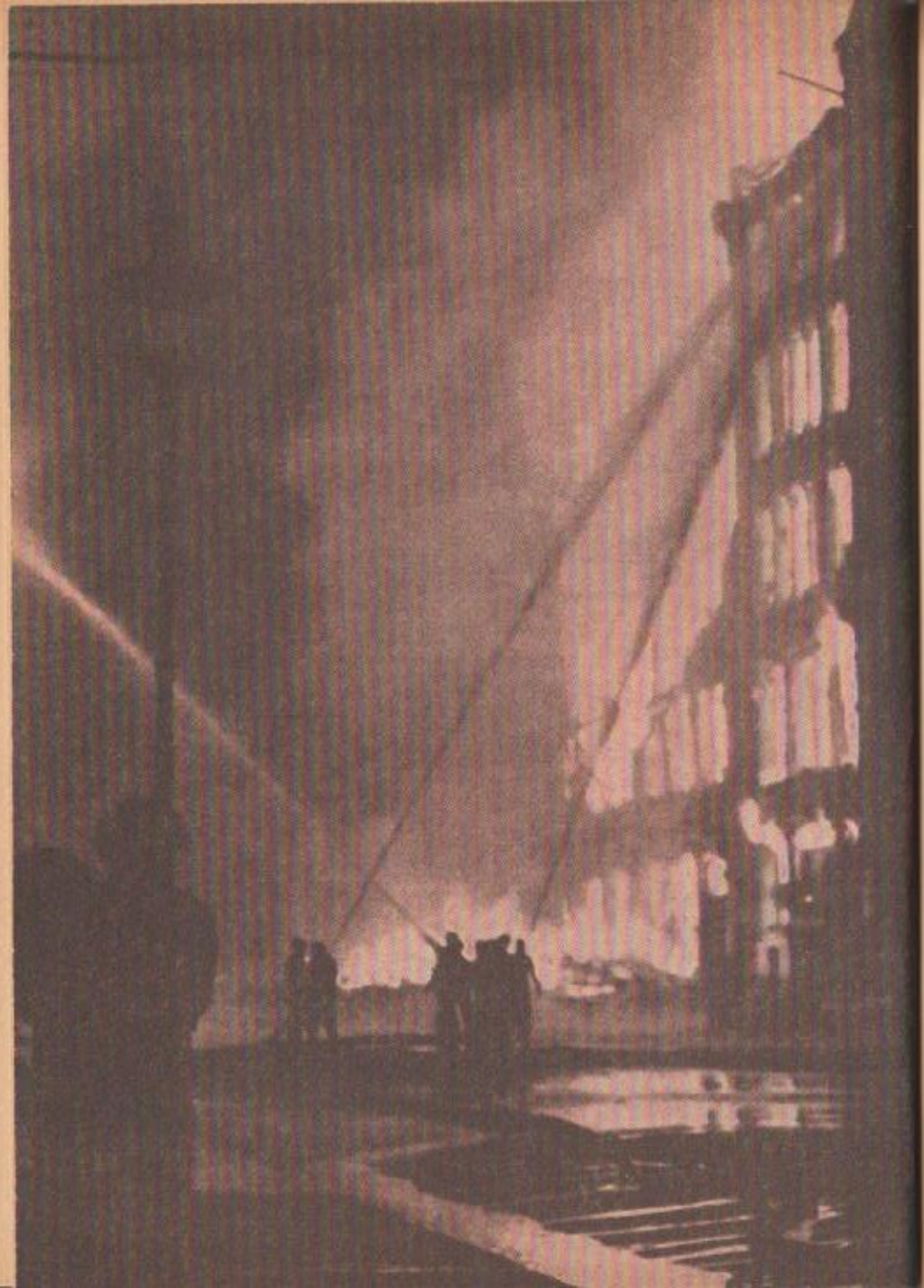
France, which had held out unbeaten for four years last time, was out of the war after six weeks. German troops stood guard over most of Europe, from the North Cape above the Arctic Circle to Bordeaux, from the English Channel to the River Bug in eastern Poland. Adolf Hitler had reached the pinnacle. The former Austrian waif, this corporal of the First World War, had become the greatest of German conquerors.

All that stood between him and establishment of German hegemony in Europe under his dictatorship was one indomitable Englishman, Winston Churchill, and the determined people Churchill led, who did not recognize defeat when it stared them in the face and who now stood alone, virtually unarmed, their island home besieged by the mightiest military machine the world had ever seen.

Condensed from "The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich," published by Secker and Warburg, London



"We shall defend our island home and with the British Empire we shall fight on unconquerable until the curse of Hitler is lifted from the brows of mankind."



'Take Cover!'

An Air Raid Warden Remembers . . .

By George Graham

"WHAT DOES it feel like when a bomb hits you?" was a question to which I invariably replied: "Quite different each time."

The night of my first experience was dark and overcast. The clouds reflected a dull red glow from fires in the East End of London. The sirens had wailed over an hour before. The streets seemed strangely empty and no friendly footsteps echoed my own as I toured the area that I was responsible for as an air raid warden. Very faintly in the distance could be heard the intermittent *burr-burr* of a high-flying plane.

Then suddenly came a thin whistle accompanied by a rushing sound, rather like the tyres of a heavy lorry on a smooth road. Old Watson, the post warden, had always said: "If you hear a bomb, remember your orders—fall down! If you are not sure, better make a fool of yourself and fall down just the same." So feeling somewhat sheepish I began gingerly to lower myself to the ground when my rate of progress was accelerated by five violent explosions.

When I opened my eyes the first thing I saw was an orange glow which seemed to come from just round the corner. As I watched, it turned to a deep red, and tongues of flame leaped skyward.

It was just outside my sector, but I ran towards the blaze. Captain Brown, one of the senior wardens, and I arrived simultaneously. "We'll take charge till one of their fellows arrives," he

panted. It was just as well we did, for the Post in whose area the bombs had dropped was itself hit. Their warden never arrived.

Captain Brown was a quiet, unassuming little man, but he quickly took command. "Get the Fire Brigade!" he snapped. "I'll see to this." As I turned away I saw him enter the blazing building.

At the fire station two efficient girls took my message and before my cab had time to turn round, a converted taxi with a trailer pump was on its way. Back at the fire Captain Brown had already organized a stirrup-pump team. A thin, effectual stream of water was being directed against the doorway—they were trying to keep the flames from the entrance so that a further rescue attempt could be made. Brown had already brought out a badly injured man and a baby. Billy Evans, another warden, had called an ambulance, so I turned to Captain Brown for instructions. It was hard to recognize him. Eyebrows, eyelashes and most of his hair had vanished, leaving him with a curiously babyish face. His lips were cracked and swollen but they were set in a grin of triumph.

"Traffic," he croaked at me, which meant that I was to divert vehicles coming that way, and, quite frankly, I was pleased to get away from the blazing house. Stationed at the crossroads I could still hear the hum of aircraft engines. "I wish they would go away," I kept repeating to myself. "Can't they find somewhere else!"

BEFORE the intense air raids began, wardens were considered to be pests enforcing the blackout, but later on we were recognized as the most important factor in civil defence. We were the first on the spot after a bomb had dropped and the last to leave. Only on our reports could ambulances, fire engines and rescue squads be sent. We had to know the houses and their occupants; where the gas and water mains were. We were local men trained to save our own homes and our neighbours'. I had been at it for a year then, studying first-aid, fire fighting and gas detection. We were trained to handle one incident at a time, then six incidents simultaneously. Actually we learned to cope with far more. One night, wardens and

householders extinguished sixteen fires in an hour. The training anticipated actual conditions surprisingly. There were more bombs but, thank God, fewer casualties than we had expected.

That first experience shook me considerably. I was just recovering from a severe attack of jaundice. The physical exhaustion and mental depression which accompany the illness made me wonder if I should not resign and let fitter men take my place.

Fortunately, the next two nights were comparatively quiet. My jaundice improved and my spirits with it. I realized that this was no time to give up. On the third night I was in charge of the shelter in Newbold Square. It was a typical municipal shelter, but larger than most, using the basements of two adjoining houses. The windows and walls had been bricked up to a thickness of thirteen-and-a-half inches. Inside, a passage had been knocked through the dividing walls. There were in all six rooms and two long corridors. The ceiling was lined with corrugated steel, propped up by timber beams. There was a supply of drinking water in beer bottles. Sacking hid the temporary lavatory accommodation.

From the first *whee-ooo* of the sirens I knew we should have a bad night. You heard the "banshee howlings" in the distance first, the "whee" rising to a hysterical shriek and the "oo-oo-oo" sinking to a low-pitched gurgle. Then sirens nearer at hand took up the lugubrious song. Eventually the local one burst forth and the air was filled with sounds, as of a thousand souls in torment. It was almost more than nerves could bear.

The sirens were still wailing when anti-aircraft guns joined the unholy symphony. Women and children staggered into the shelter, burdened with blankets and deck chairs, camp beds and mattresses and even cooking utensils. Up to midnight I was kept on the run finding accommodation until I had 136 "clients" safely installed. The guns never ceased but no bombs had yet fallen.

Seeking to relax, I took off my steel helmet, respirator, first-aid haversack, torch and other kit. I had just stretched out in a deck chair when I heard, faintly, the unmistakable swish of falling bombs.

Then explosions, one—two—three. The whole shelter reared up like a ship in a gale, shook itself, then settled down on an even keel.

"A direct hit!" I thought as I got up from under a heap of plaster and began, quite automatically, to put on my kit. The lights were still burning and all round people were picking themselves up off the floor. Somewhere a child cried, emphasizing the deathly silence in the shelter. Anxious eyes followed me as I went from room to room, but no one spoke or moved. The discipline was amazing and I felt a sense of exultation. "The shelter's stood it and no one's hurt!" Trying to give my voice authority, I said: "No one is to leave. I'm going out to see what's happened."

A cheery young cockney, in cloth cap and muffler, volunteered to guard the door and as I went out into a thick fog of brick dust I heard the buzz of excited conversation breaking out behind me.

Coughing and spluttering, I staggered over heaps of rubble. My torch failed to spot the caretaker's lodge which had stood behind the shelter. My God, it had gone! And I nearly fell into a huge crater. Then something cracked above my head and a large coping stone landed at my feet. I flashed my torch at Newbold Mansions, a block of flats on the other side of the street. A corner of it had been chopped away as neatly as with a knife. I knew people must be in the private shelter in its basement.

I started to run towards the Post. As I stumbled along I kept mumbling a sort of prayer. "Please, God, make me do the right thing and make no mistakes."

At the Post everything was quiet. Captain Brown was writing on a pad. "Express Report!" I spluttered out.

"Just a moment, Mr. Graham," said Captain Brown. "Please check the location of your incident on the map first."

This gave me a minute to recover my breath. Then Captain Brown handed a chit to the telephonist and turned to me. "Your report, please," he snapped.

Drawing myself up to attention I recited: "Casualties trapped—Newbold Mansions and 46 Windsor Road."

"Right. Take charge and good luck," said Captain Brown as I turned away.

There was still no sign of life in Windsor Road when I got back. It would be five minutes before I could expect a rescue party and it was up to me to do what I could. Suddenly a torch flashed. It was the Chief Warden for the district, who lived near by.

Together we started hauling at bricks and stones. A fire some distance away was blazing and now I could see more clearly. Four floors above our heads a large settee was balanced precariously over the edge of a sitting-room floor. I was scared. "Let's try to get in through the back," I said.

As we were crawling out of the crater I saw the lights of an approaching car, an ambulance on its way to another incident. I stopped it just as it was about to plunge into the crater. Meanwhile the District Warden had wormed his way into what was left of the house through the back. I heard his voice calling.

When I reached him he was tugging at a door jammed with masonry. Behind it I heard voices, indistinct and thick. A piece of something white was caught in the beam of my torch and, without thinking, I stopped and pulled and found myself holding by the tail the still warm body of a cat. Its head was squashed. I flung the sticky, oozy mess behind me.

At last we got the door open wide enough for us to climb through. We found a man and five women in the passageway, hemmed in by fallen brick. The man had a cut on his cheek, but the women, although covered with dust, appeared only shaken.

"Any missing?" I asked as we helped them through the opening.

"Two old ladies went to the coal cellar," the man said, pointing to the end of the passage. Just beyond it, I knew, was the crater.

Outside someone was shouting, "Incident Warden!" It was Cameron who had been sent from the Post to act as my messenger. With him was the captain of the rescue party and by the glare of the distant fire I could see his gang unloading their gear from a lorry. I was getting my second wind now and began to feel that our

system was working efficiently. A smell of gas warned me that a main somewhere was broken or cracked. I sent a second messenger to request a gas repair party. A sudden gush of water in the crater told me a water main had given way, its deluge adding to the rescue squad's difficulties. I sent Cameron to call the water company.

To make things more interesting the Germans had come back. No doubt attracted by the fire up the road, they were buzzing like moths round a lamp. The guns opened up, and I could hear bits of shrapnel hit the street. The unmistakable swish of bombs sent everyone scurrying for shelter. Prone in a doorway I intoned automatically: "Take cover!"

Two explosions were heard not far away. I learned later that Cameron and another warden were just leaving the Post when the blast of the first blew them head over heels back down the steps. Unhurt but cursing Hitler and me impartially, for they were on their way to help me, they picked themselves up and had started to climb the steps again when the blast from the second explosion sent them sprawling once more. Two very ruffled wardens eventually showed up.

Suddenly I heard someone yell, "They've got him!" In the sky, almost directly overhead, was a tent of searchlights. From all directions long white beams were focused and where they intersected was a tiny silver cross—a German bomber, twisting, diving, turning and zooming in a desperate effort to escape. Shells were bursting all round him. We cheered madly. It was like a football match and a particularly close shot would bring roars of "Well played!" "Good shot!" "Have another go, chum!" The whoop of the guns turned into a continuous roar. Then a flash lit up the heavens and the silver cross was there no more. Heartened, we went on with our work.

I was glad that when the two old ladies were dug out I was busy elsewhere and saw only the pathetic little heaps covered with regulation red blankets. They had been killed instantly, which was some consolation.

THE PERIOD of warning a bomb gave when falling was usually about five seconds, but it varied. One of the wardens, a portly fellow, found this out. When he heard the swish of a bomb, remembering his instructions, he flung himself to the ground, stopping his ears and opening his mouth. Then he counted five slowly. Nothing happened, so he unstopped his ears. The "swish" was still there. Again stopping his ears, he counted a further deliberate five. When again nothing happened he decided that the whole game was a fraud or a trick of his imagination and got ponderously to his feet only to be blown over by the explosion.

The chaps at our Post were a mixed lot. Among the wardens there were two solicitors, a gardener, a porter from a block of flats, a professional singer, a company director and a bookmaker's clerk. Watson, the post warden, was a retired businessman who did not believe in too much spit and polish and saluting. But in spite of his apparent slackness the discipline and morale were excellent. The two senior wardens were Captain Brown and Mr. Stowen, a retired ship's engineer, a rough diamond whose lurid tales of experiences in far seas would send girl telephonists rushing, scarlet-faced, from the room.

The most unpleasant task was detecting unexploded bombs in the night; the grimmest was fighting oil incendiary bombs.

We would receive a message that a time bomb was suspected in a certain area. Would we locate it, please? These missiles are generally safe for fifteen minutes, but they leave little or no crater. One night we searched for over an hour before we found a bomb in a little side street. It had fallen through a gutter grating, leaving practically no trace. Soon after we had evacuated all the inhabitants, the whole row of workmen's dwellings was wrecked by the explosion.

The oil bomb was a large sphere filled with crude oil, a horrible, murderous thing which made a queer gobbling noise as it fell. The core consisted of high explosive which ignited the oil and blew it out in all directions, coating buildings and people with flame.

Billy Evans and I were on patrol when one of these fell not far

away. We ran as fast as we could, but the house was blazing when we got there. A man was staggering in the street, flames licking upward from his blazing clothes. A thin continuous shriek was coming from the house; I shall always hear that helpless, hopeless voice ringing in my ears. We rolled the man in the gutter to smother the flames, but he was quite unrecognizable when the ambulance took him away. A girl we got out of the house, with the help of other wardens, had most of her skin burnt off. She survived by some miracle and I heard a fortnight later that she was still in a hospital, babbling in her delirium: "Why did you do it? Why did you do it?" Why, indeed.

FRIDAY the 13th is always unlucky for me. My duty on 12th September finished at 8 p.m. and I was to go on again at midnight. About nine I was sitting in our landlady's basement, listening to the distant roar of guns, the radio and the chatter of other residents. They combined into a sort of lullaby and I dozed. The whistle of a bomb woke me up. The house shook but there was no explosion. A time bomb? I felt resentful and scared. I did not want to search for it for I needed rest, but I could not leave it there to explode. I telephoned to the Post for help, and two wardens arrived at the double. By the time the bomb was located, it was nearly midnight and I had to report at the Post. Shrapnel was falling all round.

In the pitch dark the flashes of guns and the bursting of shells helped to illumine the way. I reached the Post just as midnight ushered in Friday the 13th. Everyone was cheerful there. Tea was being brewed. Wardens going off duty were glad to hand their responsibilities over to us. A telephonist was sweeping out the rooms and Hilda, the Post cat, was lapping milk.

When the patrols were being allocated, Captain Brown left me at the Post as stand-by. "You're looking seedy, Graham," he said. "Mustn't have that jaundice starting again, you know. Better stay here for a bit." Thankfully I settled down for a couple of hours.

Two reliefs had been sent out and it was my turn next. I was donning equipment when the guns opened up with a terrific barrage. Then we heard the whine of bombs. One—*that was near*, flashed through my mind. Two—*that's nearer!* Three—*he's heading for us!* I threw myself on the floor as, with a tremendous rush and whoop, something crashed through the room.

In times of crisis the strangest things stick in one's memory. As the outer wall collapsed—very slowly, it seemed to me—and the room filled with smoke and brick dust, I saw a great round hump in front of me. It was the night watchman's behind. He had thrown himself into the attitude of an Arab praying to Allah. As the hump slowly subsided and bricks and rubble clattered round me I remember saying, "Christ, Christ, Christ," in a sort of quiet monotone.

Anderson and Cameron came rushing in. From the street they had seen the bomb hit the Post. Neither they nor I could account for the fact that we were still alive. I started up the stairs to investigate the damage. Anderson followed.

The flat above the Post had been wrecked. We could not see the extent of other damage for the clouds of brick dust. I stumbled over something in the rubbish. "Andy, shine a light here a minute," I called. "What's this thing?"

"It's a boiler," said Anderson.

"No, a sewer pipe," I answered. Then the truth dawned on us. "It's the bomb!" we yelled in unison.

I began giving orders but could not tear my eyes away from that gleaming cylinder, lying like a polished monster among the debris. "Start evacuating your flats. Get everyone out. I'll clear the Post."

Captain Brown received the news calmly. "I suppose it's a fifty-pounder," he said, lighting his pipe. "Lucky it didn't explode or you chaps in the recreation room would have all gone to glory."

"So would you, sir," I replied. "It's a 500-pounder at least."

The pipe dropped from his hand. But as he stooped to retrieve it, I saw the gleam in his eye again. The old war horse was smelling powder. "Evacuate what you consider necessary," he said. "Then

take the telephonists to Post 22. We shall carry on from there."

The old night watchman in the recreation room was dead, a brick having crushed his skull. The living required our attention. The residents of the flat next door were gathered in a miserable little group in the doorway. At their head stood an old gentleman of about ninety, clad in a dressing-gown and supporting himself with a stick. He wanted to know what all the fuss was about. Without argument Anderson and I picked him up and we started off at a trot towards the nearest basement-shelter. Later I discovered that we had taken the old gentleman, and all the residents, within two feet of a crater made by yet another time bomb which no one had heard drop. When I returned to the Post, Captain Brown and the telephonists were still there, sending and receiving messages with that unexploded bomb just outside the entrance. The telephonists and I started out for Post 22 but Captain Brown remained for another two hours, methodically collecting important papers. The bomb finally did go off, but not until ten in the morning.

The ladies looked relieved as we left, but soon a barrage was going all out round us, and jagged bits of shrapnel dropping from the sky were as dangerous as bombs. We ran to a public shelter. A senior warden there refused to let the telephonists proceed.

I went on, but I must have spent most of the time on the ground covering that quarter-mile to our new headquarters. A fire was burning not far away and German planes were circling round and round. As I dived to the gutter for the tenth time and heard the distant explosion, I felt thankful that the darkness hid my antics.

It was past 3 a.m. when I reached Post 22. A table, a telephone and a welcoming cup of tea were ready for me. Half an hour later Captain Brown arrived with the Post records under his arm. He looked tired and pale but in very good spirits.

I was on my way to get him some tea when that ominous *whoosh* sent me diving under a table. My nerves were on edge. The others looked at me in surprise—but not for long. The concussion shook the building and once more brickwork and glass clattered round me.

People were picking themselves up off the floor when I crawled out. Someone was scrabbling about outside the door but apart from that there was very little sound. Then Mr. Henderson, senior warden at Post 22, strode in, his face strangely contorted behind its mask of sweat and dust. "Time bomb!" he blurted. "Everybody out!"

Twice in one night!

The guns had stopped and it was raining heavily. No fires were visible and a tinge of greyness in the east told that dawn was near. It was decided to go to Post 23 but when I telephoned them the reply was: "We're completely surrounded by fires. Glad to have you but you're probably better off where you are." That's what *they* thought.

Records to be gathered up once more, people from neighbouring houses to be evacuated. A strong smell of chlorine gas caused us to put on our respirators and as we evacuated houses we told the inhabitants to don their gas masks too as they came out. Since there had been no gas alarm, it was a shock to them to hear knocking on the door and find wardens in gas masks gibbering about unexploded bombs and the necessity to evacuate immediately, but most of them took it calmly. The little procession streaming down the grey, wet street, wearing gas masks and clutching precious belongings, hurriedly assembled, would have seemed funny had it not been so pathetic.

Eventually we found the source of the gas. A direct hit on a borough depot had blown some chlorine cylinders into the streets, some as far as a quarter of a mile away. The chlorine was used to disinfect water in the council swimming baths and there was not enough of it to do any harm.

Post 23 was surrounded by smoking and charred ruins. I looked round for our wardens but could see none. Surely out of nineteen who had come on duty that night I could not be the only one left. But this turned out to be a fact. Exhausted, they had one by one dropped out of the fray, taking rest and refuge in the nearest house. Captain Brown was the only one to arrive.

The place was crowded. People from bombed and burnt houses were clamouring for refreshment and information. "What shall we do?" "Where shall we go?" "Can I have a drink of something?"

Then another message. Two more time bombs were suspected in our sector. Captain Brown would not let me go out again. Soaked to the skin, he went off to investigate.

Left alone in that surging crowd I counted the minutes until the morning shift would come on duty. Motor coaches began to arrive to take the people to rest centres where they would be fed and clothed, and I was busily occupied in getting them away.

Many pets had to be left behind to be destroyed. It seemed to my highly strung temper then that women were making unnecessary fuss in parting with their dogs and cats. Later I realized how much these animals meant in a desolate household.

Time went by and still none of the relief shift arrived. The air raid warning sounded again and I nearly wept with impotent rage. How could I single-handed report bombs and damage, render first-aid, evacuate houses, rope off streets and do all the other necessary jobs? My jaundiced liver was making its presence felt and my lungs were nearly bursting with the effort to breathe. I had not had my shoes off for twenty-four hours and I was soaked.

But fortunately nothing dropped round us. The inspiring fortitude of the people and their gratitude when we could give them a little help made me ashamed of my grousing. At 10.30 a warden came to relieve me. He told me that all the shelters had been manned, and that although the time bomb at our Post had gone off and destroyed the building no more people had been killed. I began to feel cheerful again. But that Friday the 13th did me in and I had to retire, temporarily, from the battle of London.

Habit is a difficult thing to break.

For years I still prepared to dive into the ditch every time I heard a swish behind me. Fortunately it has always turned out to be the screeching tyres of a peaceful car.

The Enemy's Masterpiece of Espionage

By J. Edgar Hoover
Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

ONE MORNING early in January 1940, a traveller stood at the rails of a ship as it entered New York Harbour. The pilot had just come aboard with the usual officials. No one else was near as one of the boarding party whispered to the man at the rails:

"You are to be S. T. Jenkins. As soon as we land, go to the Belvoir Hotel. Wait in your room!"

That evening, after hours of waiting, Jenkins heard a key turn in a lock; the door to the next suite quietly opened and two special agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation marched in. Jenkins, who was on the FBI staff, shook hands with the agents and plunged into a disturbing report:

"I have been a student at the Nazi Espionage School, Klopstock Pension, Hamburg. My class graduated two weeks ago. In a farewell speech, the principal, Dr. Hugo Sebold, said:

" 'The greatest problem of *der Führer's* agents abroad is keeping in touch with us. The enemy has given us a great deal of trouble. But before long we shall be communicating back and forth throughout the world with impunity. I cannot explain the method now but watch out for the dots—*lots and lots of little dots!*'

"I have been sent to America with my orders—and was told nothing more," our secret agent said.

Until this time, the FBI had kept German and Japanese espionage in the United States under control by constantly uncovering

every new enemy communication technique. Counter-espionage experts had identified their couriers, traced their accommodation addresses, broken their codes, solved their secret inks and tracked down their hidden radio transmitters.

Once a box of matches found in a spy's pocket was closely scrutinized. Four of the matches, looking just like the others, were actually little pencils that wrote invisibly, the writing being developed later by a solution made from a rare drug. This story-book contraption was exposed, as well as micro-film letters rolled round spools and covered with silk thread, stitched into the spines of magazines; one film was tucked inside a fountain-pen barrel which had to be broken to extract the note.

When eight saboteurs landed on the Atlantic Coast, they carried handkerchiefs on which the High Command had written in ghost ink the names of Nazi sympathizers in the United States. From the rubber heel of one agent we removed a photographic image of a blueprint for a submarine escape device.

All these devices, and more, had been detected—but what was this matter of the "dots, dots, dots"?

At the FBI, our first move was to call in from our laboratories a young physicist who had done extraordinary work in colour microphotography. He was told to undertake certain experiments, based on guesses in our office about the meaning of Sebold's boast. Meanwhile, every agent was looking feverishly for some tell-tale evidence of the as yet undetected dots.

One day in August 1941, we met a youngish traveller from the Balkans on his arrival in the United States. We knew he was the playboy son of a millionaire. There was reason to believe that he was a German agent. With meticulous care, we examined his possessions, from toothbrush to shoes, his clothes, and his papers. While a laboratory agent was holding an envelope so that the light slanted obliquely across its surface, he saw a sudden tiny gleam. A dot had reflected the light. A dot—a punctuation point on the front of the envelope; a black particle no bigger than a fly speck.

The agent carefully touched the point of a needle under the rim of the black circle and prised the thing loose. It was a bit of alien matter that had been driven into the fibre of the paper, where it looked like a typewritten full stop. Under the microscope it was magnified 200 times. And then we could see that it was an image on a film of a full-sized typewritten letter; a spy letter with blood-chilling text:

There is reason to believe that the scientific works for the utilization of atomic-kernel energy are being driven forward into a certain direction in the United States partly by use of helium. Continuous information about the tests made on this subject are required and particularly:

1. *What process is practised in the United States for transporting heavy uranium?*

2. *Where are being made tests with uranium? (Universities, industrial laboratories, etc.)*

3. *Which other raw materials are being used in these tests? Entrust only best experts with this.*

Now we had it! The German espionage service had found a way to photograph a full-sized letter down to the size of a midge. Actually, that was what we had suspected. Our scientists had succeeded in making some very small images of our own; their handicap lay not in the theory but in lacking the emulsion the Germans had perfected.

It was incredibly ingenious and effective, this micro-dot gadget. It perfectly counterfeited a typewritten or printed dot. The young Balkan agent, for example, had four telegraph forms in his pocket, carrying Lilliputian spy orders that looked like full stops; eleven micro-dots on the four papers. Pasted under a postage stamp we found one tiny strip of the film that carried the images of twenty-five full-sized typewritten sheets.

We now knew that the Balkan playboy had orders to investigate not only the atomic energy project but also to report on monthly production of planes, how many were delivered to Britain, Canada, Australia, and how many American pilots were being trained.

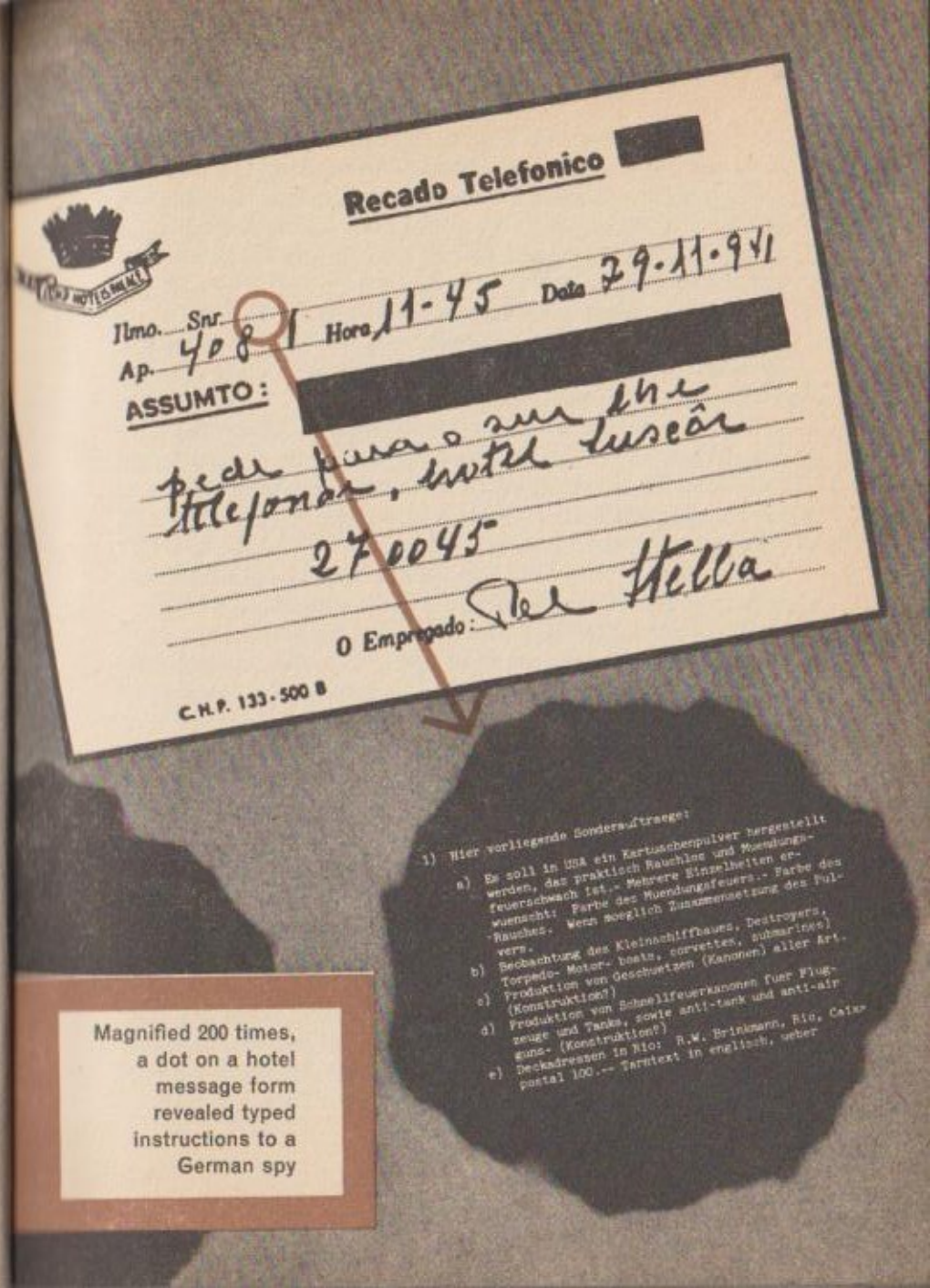
Under questioning, he was bland, affable, and, seeing that we knew about the dots, he began to gush information.

He had studied under the famous Professor Zapp, inventor of the micro-dot process, at the Technical High School in Dresden. Espionage messages were first typed on square sheets of paper and then photographed with a high-precision miniature camera. This first reduction was to about the size of a postage stamp. Again it was photographed, this time through a reversed microscope, the infinitesimally small image being retained and developed on a glass slab heavily coated with the secret emulsion. The developed negative was then painted over with collodion, so that the emulsion could be slipped bodily off the glass. The technician then used a curious adaptation of the hypodermic needle, the point of which was clipped off and the round edge sharpened. This was placed over the micro-dot as a baker's cutting cup pinches out a piece of pastry—and the micro-dot lifted out.

Next, at a point on the letter where the dot was to be placed, the paper was scratched very slightly with a needle. The syringe plunger pressed the dot into the texture. Another very small needle scratched the fibre back over the dot and finally it received a dab of collodion to tie down the fibres of the paper.

Later, Zapp immensely simplified his process. In a cabinet the size of a dispatch case, most of these operations were performed mechanically. Eventually the machines were turned out in quantity and shipped to agents in South America. Periodic consignments of the emulsion were also dispatched at intervals. To read the missives, Nazi agents in South America carried with them an ingenious collapsible microscope.

We were able to spot and intercept hundreds of micro-dot messages written in South America. Through the constant scrutiny of micro-dots we got a daily insight into the doings of various gangs. They were viciously active, acquiring information on ship movements through the Panama Canal, the deficient condition of one of the canal locks, the extent of destruction of US oil stores in the


Recado Telefonico
Ilmo. Snr.
Ap. 408
Hora 11-45
Data 29-11-941
ASSUMTO:
C.H.P. 133-500 8
O Empregado:
1) Hier vorliegende Sonderauftraege:
a) Es soll in USA ein Kartuschenpulver hergestellt werden, das praktisch Rauchlos und Muendungs-feuerschwach ist.- Mehrere Einzelheiten erwuenscht: Farbe des Muendungsfeuers.- Farbe des Rauches. Wenn moeglich Zusammensetzung des Pulvers.
b) Beobachtung des Kleinschiffbaues, Destroyers, Torpedo- Motor- boats, corvettes, submarines)
c) Produktion von Geschuetzen (Kanonen) aller Art. (Konstruktion?)
d) Produktion von Schnellfeuerkanonen fuer Flugzeuge und Tanks, sowie anti-tank und anti-air guns- (Konstruktion?)
e) Deckadressen in Rio: R.W. Brinkmann, Rio, Caixa postal 100.-- Tarntext in englisch, ueber

Magnified 200 times, a dot on a hotel message form revealed typed instructions to a German spy

attack on Pearl Harbour. Urgent demands came from Berlin for more and more. On one spy we found a seemingly innocent telephone message on a crumpled memo form from a hotel switchboard. But the printing of that form contained two full stops which when enlarged contained several messages, including the following:

Here are special orders.

It is reported that a cartridge powder is being manufactured in the USA which is practically smokeless and has a weak muzzle fire. More details desired: Colour of the muzzle fire, colour of the smoke. If possible, the composition of the powder.

The Japanese, too, were playing the dot game. On 12th February 1942, micro-dot message number ninety of a series being watched, embedded in the envelope of a letter posted to an address in Brazil, relayed a message from Tokyo to a Japanese naval attaché in South America as follows:

If communication with Q. is impossible send I. or representative to Argentina to establish communications with the naval attaché there.

Q. was a notorious Japanese naval spy.

Often messages were trumped up by the agents to fool their superiors into thinking they had extraordinary inside sources of information. Spies constantly used items from the Press; in two weeks of 1943 they sent nearly 100 messages lifted from two news magazines. But Germans in Portugal also paid neutral sailors for copies of American magazines—300 escudos, then about £4, for a single magazine containing military information. So the cat was soon out of the bag and a plaintive message came through to all German agents:

We want what is not *printed in the news.*

Many spies were arrested, many gang nests cleaned out because we had the secret of the micro-dot. One day a message mentioned casually the name of a woman resident of Madrid. A search of our voluminous cross-file revealed that some years previously she had cabled money to a man in America. We found that this young man was idling in Washington, and that he had once been very attentive

to an American girl. Later she had joined the services and was now on the Pacific Coast. As always, the Army co-operated; the girl was ordered to Washington and fifteen minutes after her arrival she was in the FBI office.

How well did she know this man? Once he had been very attentive to her but his brooding and secretive manner had repelled her; finally she dropped all correspondence with him. We put the problem to her frankly: what we needed was a pipe-line into his innermost thoughts. Would she be willing to try to discover if he were an enemy?

It was contrived that she would run into her admirer accidentally on the street. Taken in by the ruse, he was delighted to see her again and for the next month the girl played Delilah magnificently. The spy was soon put behind bars because he blabbed to her of his espionage work, believing in his vanity that she loved him enough to be his accomplice.

The most important case broken through the micro-dot was in a South American country, where we were finding letters written by all sorts of people—every one loaded with micro-dots for Berlin. Love letters, family missives, business communications, all seemed harmless, but their embedded micro-dot messages had to do with the blowing up of seized Axis ships in southern harbours and with details of war production. The letters were in different handwritings, or typed on various typewriters, but the micro-dots they secretly carried were all produced by the same machine, the signatures in the same handwriting. Hence all were prepared by a single organization. The day came when in one city after another in South America, from shop and office and home, South American authorities aided by our agents were able to seize a great interlocking ring of Nazi agents—all enemies of the Allied cause.

These are but samples of the plans we thwarted because we got that tip on the micro-dot from an agent planted right under Dr. Sebold's nose.

The Cruise of the Raider Atlantis

By Robert Littell

WHEN the look-out of the British liner *City of Exeter* reported a strange mast on the South Atlantic horizon, the captain was suspicious. It was May 1940, and Nazi Germany was on the march. But half an hour later, with relief, the skipper put the approaching stranger down as the 8,400-ton *Kashii Maru*, Japanese, and therefore neutral.

On her deck a woman was pushing a pram. Near by lolled several of the crew—dark little men whose shirt-tails fluttered in the breeze, after the fashion of Japanese seamen. The two ships passed without pause or signal.

Actually, the pram was empty, the "woman" was not a woman at all. The deck hands had names like Fritz, Klaus and Karl. The rest of the crew of 350 technicians and fighting men were hidden below. The ship herself, behind a camouflage of plywood ventilators, canvas funnels and paint, was the German raider *Atlantis*, one of the deadliest birds of prey ever let loose on the seven seas.

The Germans armed nine such raiders during the war. Together they sank 136 ships. But the *Atlantis* had the biggest haul, the longest voyage and the most remarkable commander.

She had begun life as the *Goldenfels*, a 7,800-ton express cargo ship of the German Hansa Line. When war broke out she was fitted with six concealed six-inch guns, many smaller guns, torpedo tubes, a scout seaplane and a cargo of mines. She carried also

enough disguise props to impersonate any of a dozen innocent-looking merchantmen.

In March 1940, commanded by Bernhard Rogge, a big-featured, imposing officer of forty, the *Atlantis* sneaked up the Norwegian coast dressed as a Soviet steamer and broke free into the North Atlantic. Her orders: to strike with all possible surprise at ships rounding the Cape of Good Hope.

After crossing the Equator on April 25 the *Atlantis* lowered her Soviet flag and with a flick of her counterfeit funnel became the "Japanese" motorship met by the *City of Exeter*—which Captain Rogge refrained from attacking because of the large number of passengers aboard.

First victim of the *Atlantis* was the British ship *Scientist*. The order to heave-to and not use her wireless came as a complete surprise to the *Scientist*. But her wireless officer had the presence of mind to send out a frantic "QQQ"—meaning "Armed enemy merchantman wants to stop me." The *Atlantis* opened fire, hitting the *Scientist* amidships and destroying her wireless. The seventy-seven members of the stricken ship's company took to the boats, two of them fatally wounded. All were taken aboard the *Atlantis* as prisoners, and the *Scientist* was torpedoed. The *Atlantis* sped round the Cape.

Two weeks later Captain Rogge intercepted a British warning that a German auxiliary cruiser, disguised as a Japanese ship, might be roaming the Indian Ocean. Immediately the *Atlantis* took off her kimono and became the Netherlands motorship *Abbekerk*.

The second victim was the Norwegian motorship *Tirranna*, with supplies for Australian troops in Palestine. Rogge sent a prize crew aboard, and made her trail along for some weeks as a prison ship.

One month later, three victims turned up in rapid succession. And then in the next month, five more. Messages found in the waste-paper baskets of one vessel made it possible for the Germans to break the British merchant naval code.

By now the Admiralty had ordered all ships to report suspicious

vessels by radio, regardless of consequences. As a result, the *Atlantis* had orders to shoot on sight and ask questions afterwards.

About half the raider's victims managed to send a message before they were subdued. Most of them were shelled, sometimes with heavy casualties. But Captain Rogge's solitary maritime war was as nearly "civilized" as war can be. He had room for prisoners and took aboard all that he could rescue. In twenty months at sea he sheltered—at one time or another—more than 1,000 prisoners, of all ages and nationalities, and of both sexes. He gave them the same rations as the ship's company. They were allowed on deck in the daytime unless the *Atlantis's* crew were at battle stations. They swam in the canvas swimming pool.

Captured captains had quarters to themselves. Norwegian and British officers organized a club, where Germans were frequent guests. They would talk, says one of them, about "home, the sea and beautiful women." Politics were banned. When prisoners were transferred to other ships Captain Rogge gave farewell parties for the skippers.

Through the autumn of 1940 it was fisherman's luck for the *Atlantis*: only one ship in forty days. Then suddenly, in mid-November, three ships within forty-eight hours. The Norwegian *Ole Jacob*, bursting with high-octane petrol, was seized without resistance when two officers in the *Atlantis's* motor-boat masqueraded as British officers. The Norwegian tanker *Teddy* burnt for hours, a sky-high torch visible to every ship in the area. And the *Automedon*, whose papers included a top-secret War Cabinet report and the mail for the British Far-Eastern High Command, surrendered when a shell killed everyone on her bridge.

Captain Rogge had a genius for managing men. Everyone got exactly the same share of the small luxuries—beer, sweets, food parcels—found on captured ships. As a substitute for shore leave he gave a week's leave on board ship. Twelve holiday-makers at a time took over the isolation ward. Unless there was a call to battle stations, they were free to do as they pleased, whether it was sleeping

With the *Atlantis* in the background, men of her crew take on supplies of fresh water from an island in the South Pacific.

Below: Three victims of the *Atlantis*

King City

Kemmendine

City of Baghdad

mending clothes, writing poetry or playing the guitar. This official loafing in the midst of other men's hard work had a wonderfully relaxing effect.

The year 1941 began badly for the *Atlantis*—only four ships in as many months. One of them was the Egyptian liner *Zam Zam*, with 140 American missionaries on board. The *Zam Zam's* passengers and crew, 309 people, were all safely transferred to the *Atlantis*. Next day another German ship, the *Dresden*, relieved the *Atlantis* of all these captives, and eventually brought them to Bordeaux.

The terror the raider spread probably hurt the Allies as much as the sinkings. British warships, badly needed elsewhere, had to be sent south to hunt for her. Merchantmen had to zigzag on lengthened routes, wasting time and fuel. Crews were harder to find and had to be paid danger-zone allowances. Official mail was delayed or lost.

Through most of the summer the *Atlantis* criss-crossed the southern Indian Ocean without meeting anything larger than a sea gull. Then on 10th September, 1941, she captured her 22nd—and last—victim, the Norwegian *Silvaplana*.

On 21st November, while touching down after an early-morning flight, the *Atlantis's* scout plane was disabled—just when its eyes were needed most. For next day U-boat 126 was to meet the raider to take on fuel—a delicate operation during which the *Atlantis* would be defenceless. At a rendezvous midway between Brazil and Africa the two ships met, and by breakfast time fuel oil was being pumped between them. In the motor launch alongside the submarine were several members of the *Atlantis's* crew; the submarine's captain was on board the *Atlantis*. At the same time the raider's port engine was dismantled for repairs.

Suddenly the look-out, scanning a sunlit sea, caught sight of the pencil point of a mast. Minutes later the British heavy cruiser *Devonshire*, Captain R. D. Oliver (later Vice-Admiral Oliver, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.C.) commanding, was bearing down on the two Germans.

At first glimpse of the *Devonshire* the Germans' securing lines were cast off and the U-boat dived, stranding its captain on board the raider. Had the U-boat been seen? From the disconnected fuel hose a tell-tale patch of iridescent oil spread upon the water.

There was only one hope for the *Atlantis*: bluff, talk and gain time, so as to lure the *Devonshire* within range of the U-boat's torpedo tubes.

Captain Oliver was highly suspicious. Except for such parts as ventilators, the ship he had found spreading oil on a calm sea fitted the Admiralty's description of the mysterious raider. He therefore steamed to and fro, well out of torpedo range, and bracketed the *Atlantis* with two salvoes.

This was the kind of question a sensible ship had to answer. Captain Rogge radioed that he was the vessel *Polyphemus*. Captain Oliver signalled a query to the Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic, asking if this stranger could be the genuine *Polyphemus*.

For almost an hour the *Atlantis*, hove-to and gently rolling in the swell, dragged out the conversation. There was still a faint chance that the U-126 might get close enough to the British cruiser to fire a torpedo. But the submarine's senior officer stayed near the *Atlantis* instead of going for the cruiser.

At 9.34 Captain Oliver got his answer from the South Atlantic Commander-in-Chief: "No—repeat—No!" A minute later the *Devonshire* opened fire. When the third salvo of eight-inch shells crashed down upon the *Atlantis*, Captain Rogge gave orders to set time charges and abandon ship.

Just before 10 a.m. the forward magazine blew up. A few minutes later the *Atlantis* sank by the stern. As she went down, the men whose home she had been for twenty months cheered her, and Captain Rogge, with his little Scotch terrier Ferry beside him, stood up in one of the boats and saluted.

Because Captain Oliver, in the words of the Admiralty's report, could not have stopped to pick up survivors "without running grave risk of being torpedoed," the *Devonshire* soon disappeared.

By whistle and by voice the *Atlantis's* crew were called together. Only seven had been killed by the shelling. At least 100 were swimming about or clinging to wreckage. The submarine took on board the wounded and the irreplaceable specialists. Six lifeboats packed in 200 more. Fifty-two men, provided with lifebelts and blankets, had to huddle on the submarine's deck. In case of a dive they were to swim to a lifeboat. The nearest land was Brazil, 950 miles away.

The strange flotilla—six lifeboats towed by a submarine—got under way on the afternoon of the sinking. Twice a day a rubber dinghy put out from the submarine to make the tour of the boats with a hot meal.

Three days after the sinking the U-126 was met by the German submarine supply ship *Python*, and the survivors were picked up—only to be cast upon the waters again. For the *Python* was intercepted and sunk by another British cruiser, the *Dorsetshire*, famous for having given the *Bismarck* her *coup de grâce* a few months earlier.

Eventually, in German and Italian submarines, the *Atlantis's* crew members reached St. Nazaire, and made their way to Berlin, arriving just after New Year's Day, 1942.

Captain Rogge was promoted to Rear-Admiral, and put in charge of training naval cadets. But his anti-Nazi feelings were discovered, and he was later relegated to an unimportant post.

After the war, not a few of the *Atlantis's* victims expressed kindly feelings towards Rogge. Captain White of the *City of Baghdad* wrote his thanks for the treatment he had received as a prisoner; Captain Woodcock of the *Tottenham* invited Admiral Rogge to come aboard when his ship docked in Hamburg where Rogge was living after the war. During the lean years following the collapse of Nazi Germany, former prisoners sent their ex-captor many food parcels.

As an ex-member of Rogge's crew said, "If Rogge called me I would follow him like a shot—no matter what navy it was."

The Siege of Fort Eben Emael

By Lieutenant-Colonel Paul W. Thompson

THE FORTRESS of Eben Emael, keystone of the Belgian defence line, was considered by military experts to be impregnable to direct assault. It might be besieged and at long last starved out; but taken by storm—never. Yet less than thirty-six hours after the German Army had crossed the Belgian border its 1,400 officers and men filed out of the fortress and surrendered.

Immediately an incredulous world clamoured for an explanation. Fanciful accounts of a new gas which had paralysed the garrison appeared in print. The air was full of conjecture, and the list of Hitler's "secret weapons" received some choice additions. Military men, however, whose business it is to leave no mystery of war unsolved, continued to study the case. And at length they got at the truth.

The fortress occupied a commanding position on a plateau near the River Meuse and the Albert Canal, controlling the approaches to both. Ultra-modern in design, it was flanked by a score of lesser forts scattered over an area about one mile square. These individual works were of steel, armour-plate and reinforced concrete, deeply embedded in native rock and connected by a system of deep tunnels. Each work had large-calibre guns for blasting the distant approaches, and machine-guns for close-in defence. Each one, and the fortress as a whole, was protected by dense barbed wire entanglements and belts of mines. Belgium justifiably felt secure behind the fortifications anchored on "impregnable" Eben Emael.

But the Germans had been working ceaselessly on the perfection of a new kind of heavily armed assault troops, the *Stürmbataillonen Böhm*, developed towards the end of the First World War. They were familiar with the details of Eben Emael; and very likely their experiments were made on a full-scale replica.

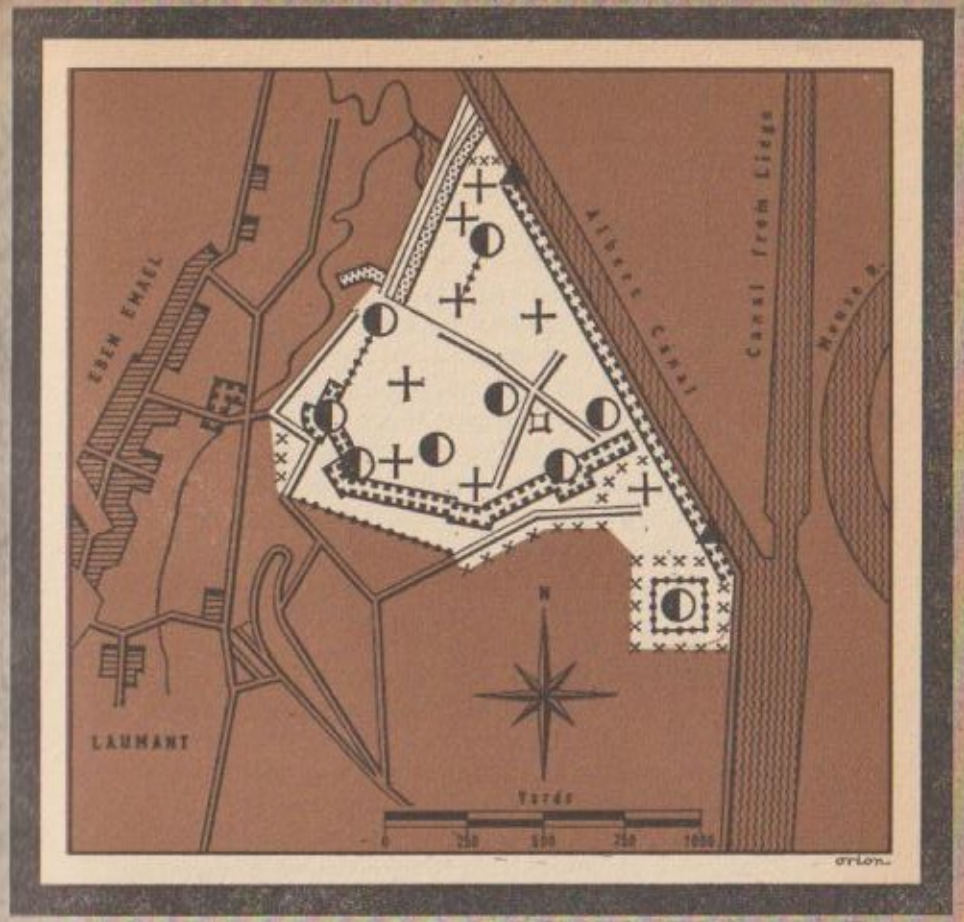
At dawn on 10th May 1940 the German juggernaut pushed across the defenceless borders of the Low Countries. Columns of tanks moved through the winding roads of Luxembourg towards Sedan in northern France. Paratroops dropped on Rotterdam. Infantry choked the roads. Aircraft filled the skies. Everywhere there was action, everywhere power.

Into this vast scene there moved a certain motorized battalion. A pinpoint lost in the great mass, it had the right of way on all roads leading towards the crossings of the Meuse and the Albert Canal at Maastricht on the Dutch–Belgian border—the back door to Eben Emael. It was a battalion of German engineers—*demolition engineers*. And it was peculiarly reinforced—by a company of infantry, a battery of anti-tank guns, a battery of small-calibre anti-aircraft guns, and a detachment of troops trained in chemical warfare.

This strange outfit was, in effect, a small fighting team. First, the demolition engineer—able to handle the deadly TNT. Second, the infantry component—ready to move in, to occupy, and to hold. Third, the anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns—tremendous accuracy and penetrating power. Lastly, the chemical-warfare unit—experts in making smoke and flame.

By nightfall of 10th May the demolition battalion had reached the base of the plateau, at the top of which lay Fort Eben Emael. Meanwhile dive-bombers had been attacking the fortress since dawn. At noon a flight of transport planes disgorged perhaps fifty paratroops who took refuge in shell holes and established radio communication with the battalion.

That evening the Belgians were shaken but by no means desperate. The works had been designed to withstand just such punishment, and they were essentially undamaged. The net result of the



Plan of Fort Eben Emael

Work with armoured turret

Work without armoured turret

Wire obstacle

Tank obstacle (ditch)

Tank obstacle (water filled ditch)

Pill box, small emplacement

Water tower

Strong fence

bombardment had been to blast some of the obstacles, to explode many of the mines, and to pock the terrain with shell holes.

At dawn on 11th May the German engineers began working their way up the slopes. The operation was difficult and the Belgian guns made it hazardous. But for one vital item the attackers would have been swept from the plateau as rapidly as they reached it: that was the bombardment of the morning before—which, while not damaging the works, had left the fields a mass of shell holes. Into these shelters the attackers dived.

Now began the climactic phase of the entire operation: the assault. The immediate objective was to get the engineers up to certain selected works. To protect their advance, flat-firing anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns delivered point-blank fire against the embrasures, trying to put out Eben Emael's "eyes." The chemical-warfare troops blinded adjacent supporting works with smoke. The infantry covered the embrasures with small arms fire and stood ready to consolidate any success the engineers might gain.

There is no minimizing the hazards involved; the losses among the engineers, as they bounded and crawled from one hole to the next, were heavy. These men resembled walking arsenals. Hand grenades were sticking out of the tops of boots and from between the buttons of blouses. Round almost every neck was slung a canvas sack bulging with seven-pound blocks of TNT. Each soldier carried a rifle or a sub-machine-gun. Many pushed or pulled fifteen-foot lengths of narrow board to which were tied, end-to-end, other blocks of TNT. Others carried twenty-foot "charge-placing poles" which looked like elongated bricklayers' hods. Still others lugged flame-throwers. It was a strange and grotesque assembly, but one in which every last detail was the result of innumerable trials.

The boards loaded with TNT were used, as in the First World War, to blast a way through the barbed wire. Each one blew a path perhaps twenty feet wide, and also destroyed near-by mines.

Guns on both sides were fired as fast as men could load them. Occasionally there was a crash louder than normal—indicating

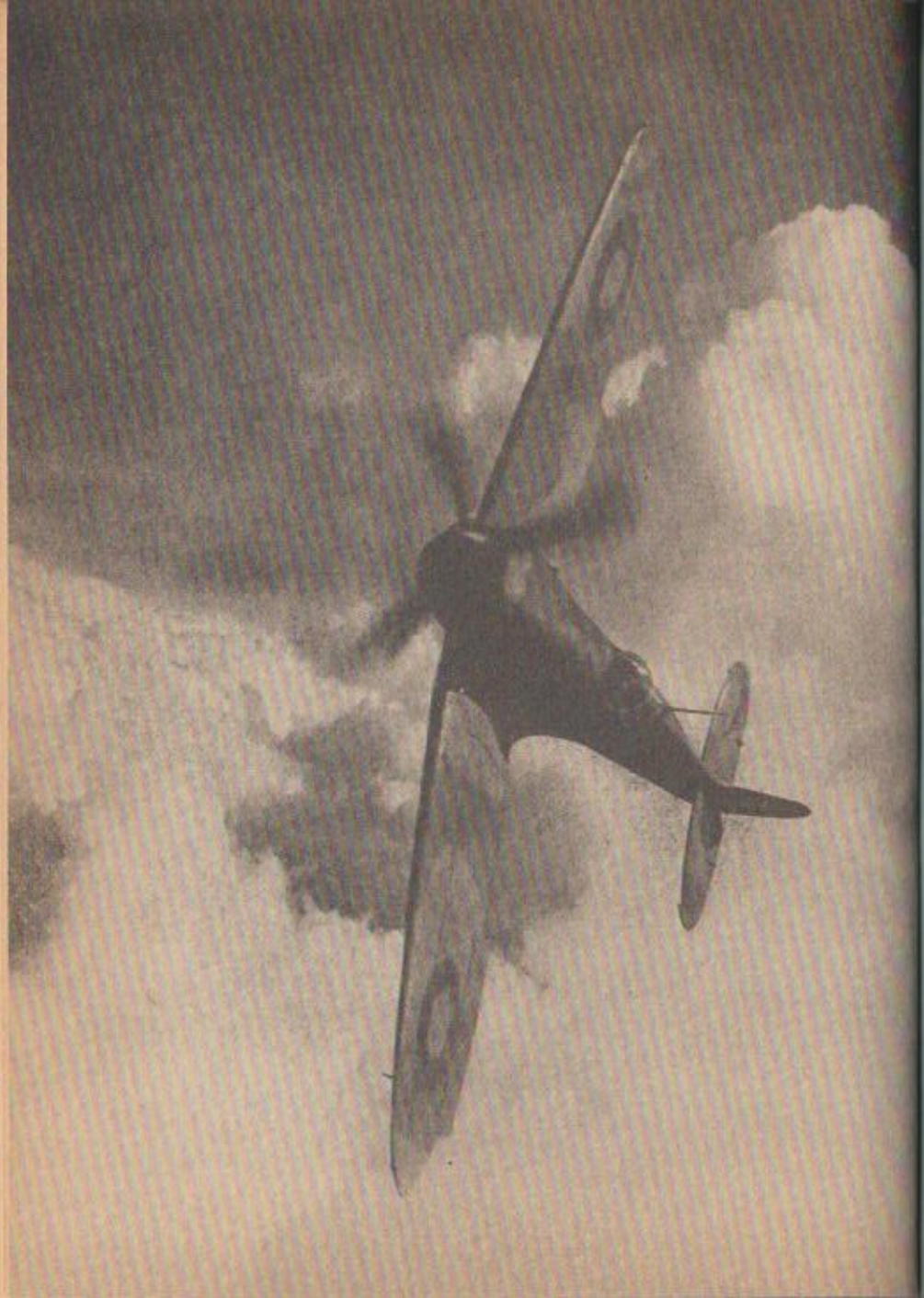
that one of the engineers and his bagful of TNT had gone up. But the advance continued. And finally the surviving engineers reached the works. Here they were comparatively safe. For a fortification can deliver deadly fire on areas far to the front, sides and rear; but there is a small area immediately adjacent to it which the guns cannot be depressed to reach.

Now began the action to which all that had gone before was simple preparation. The flame-throwers opened up against the embrasures. The engineers fused up their blocks of TNT and from their points of vantage began systematically to demolish the works by detonating the TNT against sensitive parts: embrasures, ports, turrets, joints and doors. Where possible, they placed the charge by hand, set off a delay fuse, and took cover round a corner or in a shell hole. In other cases the charges were given a shorter delay fuse and tossed into embrasures like hand grenades; or they were put in the hod end of a charge-placing pole and pushed into place.

The action which now took place defies description. The flame-throwers belched flame, the German anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns continued to fire, the Belgian guns answered. Smoke and flame and crashing detonations—it is doubtful if the history of warfare had ever seen the like. The TNT began to make itself felt. Here an embrasure went out of action, there a turret was jammed. As the Belgian ability to fire decreased, the German engineers multiplied their effectiveness. The Belgian sands were running out.

The action was too violent, the effects too decisive, to continue for long. After several works had been put out of action, the Belgian commander saw the hopelessness of the situation. His great fortress, able to command the approaches to a country, had fallen prey to a band of men armed not with howitzers and cannon but with seven-pound blocks of TNT. Early in the afternoon of 11th May the fortress surrendered. It was not a new secret weapon but the revolutionary use of an old one that did it.

Condensed from Infantry Journal



The Last Enemy

A condensation of the book

By Richard Hillary

Richard Hillary, the devil-may-care young Oxford undergraduate who exchanged his place in an Oxford rowing crew for the cockpit of a Spitfire, personified the Battle of Britain hero. His book "The Last Enemy," written while he was convalescing from a long series of operations after he had been shot down, is a personal testimony which gives a vivid, compelling picture of the impact of war on the individual. Hillary was killed on active service in 1943; his book lives on as one of the classics of the war

The English Channel: 1940

The Last Enemy

I HAD BEEN at Oxford for two years—rowing a great deal, flying a little and reading somewhat—and was not yet twenty-one when the war broke out. While it would be false to suggest that the university was blissfully unaware of the impending disaster, it was certainly true that outside events had little effect on our easy-going way of life.

I had spent every vacation visiting the Continent. On one of these trips, shortly before the war, I went to Germany. A friend of mine felt the same urge, and we worked out the cheapest way to go. About this time I had been stroking one of the boat crews. Though I was a "week-end pilot" in the University Air Squadron, rowing was the only accomplishment in which I could get credit for being slightly better than average. We wrote to the German government expressing a wish to row in one of their regattas. They replied that they would be delighted, and offered to pay our expenses. We wrote back with appropriate gratification and, having collected eight others, on 3rd July 1938, we set forth.

We were to row against one of General Goering's Prize Fours. We arrived at Bad Ems two days before the race, without a boat, and had to use a borrowed craft. The elegantly turned-out German crews, who came with carloads of supporters and set, determined faces, regarded us with contemptuous amusement. Shortly before the race, a member of a German crew harangued me about our

lackadaisical attitude and our decadent race. The German people would learn, he said, from our defeat. I suggested that he might wait until after the race before shooting off his mouth, but he was not listening.

Looking back, this race was a surprisingly accurate pointer to the course of the war. We were out of training, lacked any form of organization, and were quite hopelessly casual. We got off to such a clumsy start that we were several lengths behind at the beginning of the race. As we came to the bridge which was the half-way mark we must have been five lengths behind; but somebody spat on us. It was a tactical error. We covered the rest of the course as though pursued by fiends, and won the race. To the sullen resentment of our adversaries, General Goering had to surrender his cup; it disgraced our rooms for nearly a year until we sent it back.

THE OXFORD generation which went to war in 1939 was self-satisfied, disillusioned and spoilt. We had no Holy Grail in search of which we could lose ourselves. The war provided it, and gave us the opportunity to prove that our effete veneer was not as deep as our dislike of interference, and to demonstrate that, though undisciplined, we were a match for Hitler's dogma-fed youth.

September 3rd 1939 fell during the long vacation, and our University Air Squadron reported that day to the Volunteer Reserve Centre at Oxford.

THE WAR solved the problem of my career. As a fighter pilot I hoped for a concentration of amusement, fear and exaltation which it would be impossible to experience in any other way.

I was not disappointed.

We were drafted to an Initial Training Wing, where I found myself in command of a platoon. My fellow sergeants were farmers, bank clerks, estate agents, representatives of every class and calling. I was commissioned on the score of my experience in the University Air Squadron and I moved to another wing. Here I found myself among many old Oxford friends.

This was the pre-Dunkirk "phony-war" period, and we were inclined to regard regulations as a nuisance. We never saw an aircraft and never attended a lecture. We took an hotel room and idled away six weeks, drinking and playing cards. That our behaviour was unco-operative did not occur to us. We had joined the air force to fly, and not to parade about like boy scouts. We didn't consider, then, that elementary training might be essential, or that a certain confusion was inevitable at the beginning of the war.

But when we were sent to a flying training school on the north-east coast of Scotland, we buckled down to a routine life of flying and lectures.

Thanks to a patient instructor, I gradually developed from a mediocre performer to a quite moderate pilot. For weeks my instructor, a likeable Scot with a dour sense of humour, sat in the cockpit behind me muttering, just loud enough for me to hear, about the bad luck of getting such a fathead for a pupil. Then one day he called down, "man, you can fly at last!"

The pilots on our course ranged from schoolboys of eighteen to men of twenty-six—raw material out of which had to be welded officers for Fighter, Bomber and Coastal Commands. There as the months went by, one could watch the gradual assimilation of these men, so diverse in their lives and habits, into the composite figure that is the air force pilot.

From time to time a squadron of long-range bombers would come dropping out of the sky. For a week or so they would make our station their headquarters for raids on Norway. One day nine set out and only four returned. I watched closely the pilots in the Mess that night, but their faces were expressionless: they played bridge as usual and discussed the next day's raid.

Then one day a Spitfire squadron dropped in. It was my first glimpse of the machines I hoped eventually to fly. The trim deceptive frailty of their lines was fascinating; I spent much of my spare time climbing on to their wings and inspecting the controls.

At the end of the course, I was posted to Army Co-operation,

which entailed further training at Old Sarum before we could graduate to Lysander reconnaissance planes, which were gloomily termed "flying coffins."

Old Sarum was close to Salisbury, and the towering steeple of the cathedral was a good landmark for the airfield. A few minutes flying to the south was the sea, and across that was France, peaceful in the quiet of the evening. Within a few weeks Britain's army was to be struggling desperately to get back across that narrow stretch of water, and the France we knew was to be no more.

In the midst of our training, the war news grew bad. Every night the Mess was crowded with air force officers, parked round the radio with silent, expressionless faces, listening to the extermination of France and the desperate retreat to Dunkirk.

Privately we learnt that Lysanders were hopping across the Channel two or three times daily to drop supplies to the besieged garrison at Calais, sometimes with a solitary one-gunned fighter for support. As the Lysander was supposed always to operate under a covering layer of fighters, we could imagine how desperate the situation must be.

THEN CAME Dunkirk: tired, ragged men who had once been an army, returning now without their equipment. After days on the beaches without sight of British planes, these men were bitter, and not unnaturally. They could not know that had the RAF not gained air superiority behind them, over Flanders, they would never have left Dunkirk alive.

For us the evacuation was a newspaper story, until three of us got the day off, drove to Brighton, and saw for ourselves. The beaches, streets and pubs were a crawling mass of soldiers, British, French and Belgian. They had no money but were being royally welcomed by the locals. They were very tired and very patient. It had been so long. What could a few more hours matter? The most frequent request was for somewhere to bathe their feet. We collected two French soldiers and a Belgian dispatch rider, and

took them off for a drink. The pub we chose was full of soldiers, and we were soon involved in half a dozen arguments over the whereabouts of our aircraft over Dunkirk. Knowing personally several pilots who had been killed, and with some knowledge of the true facts, we found it hard to keep our tempers.

The French soldiers were less bitter: while they had seen few British aircraft, they had seen no French at all. But our Belgian endorsed everything we said. "How could we expect to see many British planes?" he asked. "There was a heavy fog over the beaches and they were up above."

One fight, however, he had seen—a lone Spitfire among four Junkers. For him, he said, it had been symbolic. If that Spitfire came out on top, they would be rescued. He prayed, and his prayer was answered. It shot down two Germans, crippled a third, and the fourth made off.

We talked and drank well into the night. The returned soldiers were tired and relaxed, content to sit back, their troubles for the moment over. We were taut and expectant, braced by our first real contact with the war. Finally, through an alcoholic haze, we made our farewells and set off for Old Sarum. We were late and drove fast. There was no moon. Coming out of a bend, our car skidded, hung for a moment on two wheels, then turned over, once, twice. After extricating ourselves, we found that we hadn't even a scratch. "It looks," said one of my companions, "as though Fate doesn't want us to go out this way."

A FEW WEEKS later, all leave was cancelled, no one was allowed far from the airfield, and the invasion scare was on.

The government's appeal to the people to stay put and not to evacuate roused Britain to the imminence of disaster. It could actually happen. Britain's green and pleasant land might at any moment wake to the noise of thundering tanks, to the sight of an army dropping from the skies, and to the realization that it was too late. The civilian population woke up. It was their war.

From the age of seventeen to seventy they came forward for the Home Guard. If they had no arms—and usually they hadn't—they drilled with brooms. The spirit was there.

OWING TO the sudden collapse of France and the consequent vulnerability of Britain, the Air Ministry had ordered fifteen of us to be transferred to fighter squadrons. Each looked at his neighbour as though he were suddenly an enemy. There were twenty of us; the five who would stay behind were to be drawn from a hat. It was my worst moment of the war, and I speak for all the others.

After the drawing—I was lucky—we left for Gloucestershire for a fortnight's training. There we learned of the German habit of stepping up their fighter escorts in layers all round their bombers, their excellence in carrying out a pre-arranged manoeuvre, and their confusion once their plan was disturbed.

We learned of the advantage of height, and of attacking from out of the sun; of the Germans' disinclination to fight on unfavourable terms; of the Messerschmitt's almost standardized method of evasion—a half roll followed by a vertical dive. We learned of the necessity to work as a squadron, and to understand thoroughly every command of the squadron leader whether given by radio or gesture. We learned to appreciate the contribution of our ground crews to a successful day's fighting. We learned that we should never follow a plane down after hitting it. This point was driven home by the example of five planes all of which followed each other down. Only the top machine survived.

And we learned, finally, to fly the Spitfire.

Though I suffered some trepidation before my first flight, I soon got the "feel" of the new machine enough to try it out in aerobatics. I put it through every manoeuvre I knew, and it responded beautifully. After that, I felt an exhilarating confidence. I could fly a Spitfire; it remained to be seen whether I could fight in one.

We also had to put in an oxygen climb to 28,000 feet, an air-firing exercise, formation attacks and numerous dog fights. The oxygen

climb was uneventful, but lengthy. Hemets, goggles and oxygen mask, gave me a feeling of restriction, and from then on I flew with goggles up. The results were to be far-reaching.

During the air-firing exercise, all eight guns roared out from a quick pressure on the fire button on the control stick. The noise through the closed-in cabin was muffled, but the tremendous recoil caused a drop in speed of forty miles per hour.

When we were sent up for a practice dog fight, two of us would go off and try to "shoot" each other down. On one occasion I went up with an instructor named Kilpatrick. We climbed to 10,000 feet, and he indicated that he would get on my tail. He succeeded. In frenzied eagerness I hurled my machine about the sky. Never, I felt, had such things been done to a plane; they must inevitably dislodge him. But my mirror showed that he was behind me like a patient nursemaid following a too boisterous charge.

Then he signalled to me to get on his tail and stay there. I carried out the first part of my order and started to pursue him in ever-tightening circles. I attempted to get him in my sights, but could never quite succeed. I kept expecting to catch him, but these circles were making me dizzy. Then I glanced in my mirror: he had turned the tables and was now following me, his guns in position to shoot me down. I was "dead" long ago.

On landing, Kilpatrick told me of the slight use of aerobatics in battle. A loop or a slow roll presented a target your opponent could easily keep in his sights. The best manoeuvres for evasion were a half roll and a controlled spin—especially if you had been hit, for it gave an impression of being out of control. For the rest it was a question of turning inside your opponent, thinking quickly and clearly, and breaking away quickly.

Our training ended, and it was announced that 603 City of Edinburgh Squadron had three vacancies. Three of us who had been together at Oxford, Peter Pease, Colin Pinckney and I, put our names down and were sent to join Flight "B" which was operating near Montrose in Scotland.

For the most part, life at Montrose was very agreeable. The airfield lay just beyond the town, parallel to the sea, one edge of the landing field merging into the dunes. The squadron was comparatively inactive, though we knew that at a not very distant date the war would be upon us.

ONE DAY Peter Pease and I were sent by train to Edinburgh to fly up a couple of new Spitfires. Peter had never had much to say about the war, and on the train I felt an urge to get behind his natural polite reserve. So I asked him straight out his reasons for fighting. He evaded the question at first, but I pressed him, and he looked at me with that slow smile of his. "I would say that I was fighting the war to rid the world of fear—of the fear of fear is perhaps what I mean. If the Germans win this war, nobody except little Hitlers will dare do anything. All courage will die out of the world—the courage to love, to create, to take risks, whether physical or intellectual or moral. Thus all spontaneity will die out of the world. The oxygen breathed by the soul, so to speak, will vanish and mankind will wither."

"That's all negative," I said. "Isn't there something positive you want?"

"Of course there is. What I want is to see a better world."

"What do you mean by better?" I challenged him. "Christian?"

"Yes, Christian, of course. It isn't only that I am Christian by faith; I don't know of any other way of life worth fighting for. Christianity means to me, on the social plane, freedom, man's humanity to man. I believe that we should all make our contribution to the betterment of humanity. You don't agree. I can see that."

"You're quite right," I said, "I don't. I think your Christianity clouds the issue. To be brutal about it, I say I am fighting this war because I believe that in war one can swiftly develop all one's faculties to a degree it would normally take half a lifetime to achieve. That's why I am in the air force. For in a Spitfire we're back to war as it ought to be. Back to individual battle, to total

responsibility for one's own fate, to self-reliance. One either kills or is killed; and it's damned exciting. The mass of mankind leaves me completely cold."

"You're a fraud, Richard," Peter said cheerfully. "And I am sure you will change your tune. Something bigger than you or me is coming out of this; something that will make you forget yourself."

"I doubt it," I said; and at that we left it.

WHEN WE got back to Montrose, we were greeted with exciting news. "We're on our way!" The whole squadron was moving south to Hornchurch, an aerodrome twelve miles east of London on the Thames estuary. For us the war had begun.

Our relief squadron was already coming in, and in a few minutes we roared across the aerodrome and headed south.

Twenty-four of us flew south that 10th day of August 1940: of those twenty-four, eight were to fly back.

AT HORNCHURCH planes were already in action. One flight started coming in about half an hour after we landed, smoke stains along the leading edges of the wings showing that all the guns had been fired. "You don't have to look for Jerries," we were told. "You have to look for a way out."

At this time the Germans were making a determined attempt to wipe out our fighter force. From dawn till dusk the sky was filled with Messerschmitt fighters; there were comparatively few bombers. The first attack usually came over about breakfast time and from then until eight o'clock at night we were almost continuously in the air. We ate when we could.

On the morning after our arrival, the voice of the controller came unhurried over the loudspeaker, telling us to take off. I climbed into the cockpit and felt an empty sensation in the pit of my stomach. That morning, I knew, I was to kill for the first time. That I might be killed or injured did not occur to me. I wondered idly what he was like, this man I would kill. Was he young, was

he fat, would he die with the Fuehrer's name on his lips, or would he die alone, in that last moment conscious only of himself as a man? I would never know. Then I was being strapped in, my mind automatically checking the controls, and we were off.

We ran into them at 18,000 feet, twenty yellow-nosed Messerschmitts, about 500 feet above us. Our squadron strength was eight, and as they came down we went into line astern and turned head-on to them. I could almost feel the leading Nazi pilot push forward on his stick to bring his guns to bear on our leading machine. At the same moment our section leader quickly nosed up and led us over them in a steep climbing turn. In two vital seconds they lost their advantage. I saw our leader let go a burst of fire at the leading plane, saw the Nazi put his machine into a half roll, and knew that he was mine. I kicked the rudder to the left to get him at right angles, turned the gun button to "Fire," and let go in a four-second burst. He came right through my sights and I saw the tracers from all eight guns thud home. For a second he seemed to hang motionless; then a jet of red flame shot upward and he spun to the ground.

For the next few minutes I was too busy to think of anything, but when, after a short while, they made off over the Channel, my mind began to work again. It had happened.

My first emotion was one of satisfaction, at a job adequately done, at the final logical conclusion to months of specialized training. And then I had a feeling of the essential rightness of it. He was dead and I was alive; it could so easily have been the other way round. I realized in that moment just how lucky among soldiers a fighter pilot is. His emotions are those of the duellist—cool, precise, impersonal. He is privileged to kill well.

After the first two days, we determined not to let ourselves be caught from above. We would fly on the reciprocal of the course given us by the controller until we got to 15,000 feet, and then fly back again, climbing all the time. Thus we kept the enemy below us, and were in position to deliver a squadron attack. If caught at a disadvantage, they always turned back for the Channel.

During that August and September we were always outnumbered. After a few seconds we always broke up our squadron attacks, and the sky was a smoke trail of individual dog fights. The squadron then came home individually. After an hour, there would be a check-up on who was missing. Often a telephone call would tell of some pilot who had made a forced landing in another field. One sergeant pilot was shot down four times but always turned up unhurt. But the telephone wasn't always so welcome. It might be a rescue squad announcing the number of a crashed machine; then another name would be crossed off the list. At that time, the losing of pilots was somehow impersonal; nobody, I think, felt any great emotion—there simply wasn't time.

ABOUT SEVEN O'CLOCK one evening came the voice of the controller: "603 Squadron take off; further instructions in the air."

We made a dash for our machines and within two minutes were off the ground. In a few minutes we reached 15,000 feet. We then turned about and flew in an all-out climb, thus coming out of the sun.

Over the radio came the voice of the controller, with instructions; we were to intercept about twenty enemy fighters at 25,000 feet. Then quite clearly I heard the Germans excitedly calling each other over the radio. I switched my set to "send" and called out "*Halts Maul!*" and all the German invective I could remember. To my delight I heard one of them answer, "You feelthy Englishmen, we will teach you how to speak to a German." These radio mix-ups were not infrequent.

I looked down. It was a completely cloudless sky. Way below lay the English countryside, stretching lazily into the distance, a quite extraordinary picture of green and purple in the setting sun. We were at 28,000 feet. At that moment I heard a "Tally-ho!" and our leader dropped down in a slow dive in the direction of the approaching planes.

"O.K. Line astern."

They were about 2,000 feet below us, but must have spotted us

at the same moment, for they were forming a protective circle, one behind the other, which is a defence formation hard to break.

"Going down!"

One after the other we peeled off in a power dive. In a few seconds the sky was a bedlam of machines; I got in a four-second burst on one. Several others were knocked down. Then suddenly there was silence and not a plane to be seen. I noticed then that I was very tired and hot. Sweat was streaming down my face.

Flying about the sky on one's own was not healthy. I still had some ammunition left, and, wanting to use it to good purpose, I looked round the sky for friendly fighters with whom I might join up. About a mile away I saw a formation of some forty Hurricanes, and set off in their direction. About 200 yards from the rear machine, I looked down; 5,000 feet below was another formation of fifty machines flying in the same direction.

Then I suddenly woke up. There were far more machines flying together than the British could ever muster over one spot. I looked closely at my "Hurricanes;" sure enough, there were swastikas on their tails. They seemed oblivious of my presence; I had the sun behind me and a glorious opportunity. I let go a three-second burst into the rear machine. It flicked on to its back and spun out of sight. Feeling like an irresponsible schoolboy who must inevitably be found out, I glanced round me. Nobody had noticed. I could have repeated the performance, but I felt it inadvisable to tempt Providence too far. I made off home.

SEPTEMBER 3rd dawned dark and overcast. We came out on to the tarmac at about eight o'clock. I was worried. My plane had been fitted with a new cockpit hood, which would not slide open, so I couldn't bail out quickly if I had to. The corporal-fitter and I set upon it with a heavy file, furiously filing and oiling. At last the hood began to move: but at 10 o'clock it was still sticking firmly half-way. At 10.15, what I had feared happened. Down the loudspeaker came the controller's emotionless voice: "603 Squadron

take off; further orders in the air. 603 Squadron take off, quickly."

As I pressed the starter and the engine roared into life, the corporal stepped back and crossed his fingers significantly. The leading section took off in a cloud of dust; my squadron leader looked across and put up his thumbs. I nodded and opened up, to take off for the last time from Hornchurch.

At about 12,000 feet we came up through the clouds: I looked down and saw them spread out below me like layers of whipped cream. I peered anxiously ahead, for the sun made it difficult to see, and we had been warned of at least fifty enemy fighters. They must have been 1,000 feet above us when we sighted them coming straight on like a swarm of locusts. I remember cursing and going automatically into line astern: then we were in among them and it was each man for himself.

The next ten minutes was a blur of twisting machines and tracer bullets. One Messerschmitt went down in a sheet of flame on my right, and a Spitfire hurtled past in a half roll. Then, just below and to my left, I saw what I had been praying for—a Messerschmitt climbing and away from the sun. I closed in and gave him a two-second burst: fabric ripped off the wing and black smoke poured from the engine, but he did not go down. Like a fool, I did not break away, but put in another three-second burst. Red flames shot upward and he spiralled out of sight.

At the same moment a terrific explosion knocked the control stick from my hand and the whole machine quivered like a stricken animal; in a second, the cockpit was a mass of flames. I reached up to open the hood. It would not move. I tore off my straps and managed to force it back; but this took time, and when I dropped back into the seat and reached for the stick to turn the plane on its back, the heat was so intense that I felt myself going. I remember a second of sharp agony, remember thinking, "So this is it!" and putting both hands up to my eyes. Then I passed out.

When I regained consciousness I was free of the machine and falling rapidly. I pulled the rip cord of my parachute and checked

my descent with a jerk. Looking down, I saw that my trouser leg was burnt off, that I was over the sea, and that the English coast was far away. I flopped into the sea with my parachute round me.

The water was not too cold and my life jacket, my "Mae West," kept me afloat. I noticed that the skin of my hands was dead-white up to my wrists: I felt faintly sick from the smell of burnt flesh. By closing one eye, I could see my lips jutting out like tyres.

After about half an hour my teeth started chattering, and to quiet them I kept up a tuneless chant, varying it from time to time with futile calls for help. The water now seemed much colder and I noticed with surprise that the sun had gone in. I looked down at my hands and, not seeing them, realized that I had gone blind.

It was unlikely, I concluded, that I should be picked up. So I was going to die. It came to me like that—I was going to die and I was not afraid. The manner of my approaching death appalled me, but I felt only a profound curiosity and a sense of satisfaction that within a few minutes or a few hours I was to learn the great answer. I decided that it should be within a few minutes and, reaching up, managed to unscrew the valve of my Mae West. The air escaped in a rush and my head went under. I swallowed a large quantity of water, came up and tried again, to find that I was so enmeshed in my parachute that I could not keep my face under. I lay back and laughed. By this time I was probably not entirely normal, but there was something irresistibly comical in my grand gesture of suicide being so simply thwarted.

It is said that a dying man relives his whole life in one rapid kaleidoscope. I merely thought gloomily of the squadron returning, of my mother at home, and of the few people who would miss me. I began to feel a terrible loneliness, and knew that delirium was approaching. Finally, as in a dream, I heard somebody shout: it seemed far away and quite unconnected with me. . . . Then willing arms were dragging me over the side; my parachute was taken off; a voice said, "O.K., Joe, it's one of ours and still kicking." I was safe.

Watchers on the coast had seen me come down, and after three

hours search the Margate lifeboat found me fifteen miles out in the North Sea. While in the water I had been numb and had felt little pain. Now I was quite conscious and, as I began to thaw out, the agony was such that I could have cried out. It seemed to take an eternity to reach shore. I was put into an ambulance and driven rapidly to the hospital. They cut off my uniform and I gave the nurse the requisite information about my next of kin. Then, to my infinite relief, I felt a hypodermic syringe pushed into my arm and I lost consciousness.

I SEEMED to be falling slowly through a dark pit. I was hot now, on fire and screaming soundlessly. The sickly smell of death was in my nostrils and a confused roar of sound. Then all was quiet.

Someone was holding my arms.

"Quiet now, you're going to be all right."

"Is that you, nurse? What have they done to me?"

"They've put something on your face and hands to stop them hurting and you won't be able to see for a while. Don't talk."

I can recollect no moments of acute agony in the four days I spent in that hospital; only a great sea of pain in which I floated almost with comfort. My face and hands had been sprayed with tannic acid which had set into a hard, black cement. My arms were propped up in front of me, the fingers extended like witch's claws, and my body was hung loosely on straps just clear of the bed. My eyes were coated with a thick layer of gentian violet. Every three hours I was injected with morphia, so I was mainly in a semi-stupor.

The memory of it remains a confused blur. An appalling thirst, and hundreds of bottles of ginger beer. Being blind, and not feeling strong enough to care. The smell of ether. Matron once doing my dressing with three orderlies holding my arms; a nurse weeping quietly at the head of the bed. A sensation of time slowing down, and an overriding apathy. My parents coming down to see me, and their wonderful self-control. For the sake of decorum my face had been covered with white gauze. We spoke little; my only

coherent remark being that I had no wish to go on living if I were to look like Alice, a former maid of ours who had been burnt and badly disfigured.

Finally I was moved to a London hospital, arriving so exhausted that I fainted. The house surgeon took the opportunity to give me an anaesthetic and remove the tannic acid from my left hand. During the time I was under I saw Peter Pease killed.

He was after another machine, leaning forward with a smile at the corner of his mouth. Suddenly from nowhere a Messerschmitt was on his tail. At the top of my voice I shouted: "Peter, for God's sake, look out behind!" I saw the Messerschmitt open up and a burst of fire hit Peter's machine, which turned slowly on its back and dived to the ground. I came to, screaming his name, with two nurses and a doctor holding me down.

Two days later I had a short letter from Colin, hoping I was getting better and telling me that Peter was dead.

Slowly I came back to life. My morphia injections were less frequent and my mind began to clear. At first my dressing had to be changed every two hours during the day, and as this took over an hour my nurses had practically no time off. It was entirely due to them that both my hands were not amputated.

Then one day I found that I could see. My nurse was bending over me doing my dressings, and she seemed to me very beautiful. I watched her for a long time, grateful that my first glimpse of the world should be of something so perfect. Finally I said: "Sue, you never told me that your eyes were so blue."

For a moment she started at me. Then, "Oh, Dick, how wonderful!" and she fled to find the other nurses. I felt absurdly elated.

The district was blitzed regularly. Night after night we heard the scream and crump of falling bombs. The Germans always seemed to choose a moment when my eyes were being irrigated and my poor nurse was poised above me with a glass undine in her hand. One night I had the unpleasant sensation of hearing a stick of bombs gradually approaching, the first some way off, the next

closer and the third shaking the building. My nurse threw herself across my bed. But the fourth bomb never fell, and she got up quickly, looking embarrassed.

After two months I was sufficiently recovered to be operated on. The air force plastic surgeon, Archibald McIndoe, regarded me speculatively with a pair of tired, friendly eyes. "Made a thorough job of it, didn't you?" he said. He took a scalpel and tapped lightly on something white showing through the red granulating knuckle of my right forefinger. "Bone," he remarked laconically. He looked at the eyelids and pursed his lips. "You need four new ones."

An eye specialist came in to look at me. "Can't close your eyes at all, can you?" he asked.

"No, sir," I said.

"Well, we'll have to cover that left eye or you'll never use it again. You'll go to the Plastic Hospital tomorrow."

When my turn at the operating table came I was not uncomfortable; apart from a slight pricking of the eyes I felt no pain. There was the operation, then five boring days without reading; then McIndoe took the dressing from my eyes and I saw again. "A couple of real horse blinkers you've got there," he said; and for a day or so that is what they felt like. In order to see in front of me I had to turn my face up to the ceiling. The eyelids moulded in very rapidly, however, and soon I could raise and lower them at will. It was a remarkable piece of surgery, an operation in which McIndoe had never scored a failure.

After a fortnight at a near-by convalescent home I went back to the hospital for two lower eyelids. This time when the dressings were taken off I looked exactly like an orang-utan. McIndoe had pinched out two semicircular ledges of skin to allow for contraction of the new lids; what was not absorbed was to be sliced off when I came in for my new upper lip. The relief, however, was enormous, for now I could close my eyes almost completely and did not sleep with them rolled up with the whites showing.

Once again I retired to the convalescent home. It was January

1941 when I returned to the hospital. I was not cheered by the discovery that the only available bed was in the ward which housed some of the worst cases. Opposite me was Squadron Leader Gleave with a flap graft on his nose and an exposed nerve on his forehead; the nurse could not drug him enough to stop the pain. On my left was Mark Moundsman, who had trained with me in Scotland and was awaiting an operation on his eyelids. Beyond him was a blind man, blown up and burnt at Dunkirk, with a complete new face and no hands.

I reached the operating theatre feeling quite emotionless. When I came round, I was bandaged from forehead to lip and unable to breathe through my nose. Next evening a doctor took the bandages off my eyes; there were two sets of semicircular stitches under them and I noticed that my left eyebrow had been lifted to pair it with the other. Eight days after the operation the dressing was taken from my lip and the stitches cut from under my eyes, to the accompaniment of appreciative purrs from the doctor's satellites. I asked for a mirror and gazed at the result. Though it was a surgical masterpiece, it was a blow to my vanity: the new lip was dead-white and thinner than its predecessor. I was not very gracious.

About this time Edmonds, the worst-burnt pilot in the air force, was re-admitted to the hospital and placed in the bed next to mine. When he had first been brought to McIndoe he was unrecognizable and had lain for months in a bath of his own suppuration. McIndoe had performed two emergency operations, and had then left it to time and careful dressings to heal him enough for more. It would take five years to build him a new face. Never once had Edmonds complained. He was completely cheerful, and such was his charm that after two minutes one never noticed his disfigurement. I felt very small when I remembered some of my own outbursts.

THERE WERE set-backs. The hospital was bombed and all the patients shifted. There were infections in the grafts and an emergency operation for mastoid. The long job of making my claws into

hands began. I lay in that hospital and watched summer slowly turn to winter. During all that time I had ample opportunity for serious thinking.

Something had been happening in my thoughts, in my way of looking at life. Just what it was I could not be sure. During training, my life was too full of good times, during battle too full of action, during hospitalization too full of pain, to find an opportunity to add it up, make a sum, think it through.

Now, during convalescence, I seemed to be groping for a new concept, struggling to redefine the values that were to govern my life. I vaguely sensed that the slap-dash, egocentric attitudes that had served me well enough as an undergraduate at pre-war Oxford would no longer serve. Yet I had nothing to take their place. My awakening came suddenly, one night.

For some time now I had been allowed to be up and about on my own, and on this night I went up to London. A heavy raid was on when I arrived. At the station I managed to get hold of a taxi, but my driver seemed doubtful whether we should be able to go very far. Some machine dropped a flare and in the sudden brightness before it was put out I saw that the street was empty. What cars there were were parked along the kerb and deserted.

"I'm afraid we'll be stopped, sir," said the cabby. At that moment there was a heavy crump unpleasantly close and glass flew across the street.

"See if you can find a pub and we'll stop there," I shouted.

He drew his cab up before a dimly lit sign. "The George and Dragon." Inside there was a welcoming glow of bright lights, and we soon had our faces deep in mugs of mild-and-bitter.

Though at the hospital I had dozed off regularly to the lullaby of the German night offensive, I had never heard anything like this. The volume of noise shut out all thought, and there was no lull. It was an orchestra of madmen playing incessantly. I thought, "God! What a stupid waste if I were to die now." I wished with all my heart that I was down a shelter.

"We'd be better off underground tonight, sir, and no mistake." It was my cab driver speaking.

"Nonsense," I said. "We couldn't be drinking this down there," and I took a long pull at my beer.

I was pushing the glass across the counter for a refill when we heard it coming. Everyone was diving for the floor. The barmaid (she was of considerable bulk) sank from view with a desperate slowness behind the counter and I flung myself tight up against the other side, my cab driver beside me.

My hands were pressed tight over my ears but still the detonation deafened me. The floor rose up and smashed against my face, the swing-door tore off its hinges and crashed over a table, glass splinters flew across the room, and behind the bar every bottle seemed to be breaking. The lights went out, but there was no darkness. An orange glow from across the street shone through the wall and threw everything into a strong relief.

I scrambled unsteadily to my feet and was leaning over the bar to see what had happened to the barmaid when a voice said: "Anyone hurt?" and there was an Auxiliary Fire Service man shining a torch. At that everyone began to move, slowly and reluctantly as though coming out of a dream. Only the barmaid failed to get up.

"I think there is someone hurt behind the bar," I said. The fireman nodded and went out to return almost immediately with two stretcher-bearers. They got her on the stretcher and disappeared. She had escaped with little more than a severe cut on the head.

When we had found our way out into the street, the AFS man turned to us. "If you have nothing very urgent on hand," he said, "I wonder if you'd help here for a bit. The next house was hit and there's someone buried in there." It was clearly lit by the flames—a heap of bricks and mortar, wooden beams and doors, and one framed picture, unbroken. It was the first time that I had seen a building newly blasted.

We dug, or rather we pushed, pulled, heaved and strained, I

somewhat ineffectually because of my hands; I don't know for how long, but it seemed endless. From time to time I was aware of figures round me: an air raid warden, his face expressionless under a steel helmet; once a soldier swearing savagely in a quiet monotone; and the cab driver, his face pouring sweat.

And so we came to the woman. It was her feet that we saw first and, whereas before we had worked doggedly, now we worked with a sort of frenzy. She was not quite buried, and through the gap between two beams we could see that she was still alive. We got the child out first. It was handed along carefully and with an odd sort of reverence by the warden, but it was dead. She must have been holding it to her in the bed when the bomb came.

Finally we made a gap wide enough for the bed to be dragged out. The woman who lay there looked middle-aged. She lay on her back and her eyes were closed. Her face through the dirt and streaked blood was the face of a thousand working women; her body under the cotton nightdress was heavy.

Round me I heard voices. "Where is the ambulance?" "Don't move her!" "Let her have some air!"

I was at the head of the bed, and looking down into that tired, bloodstreaked, workworn face I had a sense of complete unreality. The woman opened her eyes and reached out her arms instinctively for the child. Then she started to weep, quite soundlessly, with no sobbing. Tears were running down her cheeks when she lifted her eyes to mine.

"Thank you, sir," she said and took my hand in hers. She was obviously dying. And then, looking at me again, she said, "I see they got you, too."

I pulled the cap down over my eyes and walked out into the street. With difficulty I kept my pace to a walk. I wanted to run, to run anywhere away from that scene.

It started, small but insistent, deep inside me. It was coming from a long way back, welling up uncontrollably. I was helpless with rage. The woman's death had been unjust, a crime, a sin

against mankind—words which even as they passed through my mind seemed to me bitterly futile.

That that woman should so die was an enormity so great it was terrifying. It was not just the German bombs, or the German Air Force, or even the German mentality, but a feeling of the very essence of anti-life that no words could convey. This was what had filled me with unutterable rage. For I had recognized in that moment what Peter and the others had instantly recognized as evil and to be destroyed utterly. I saw now that it was not crime, it was Evil itself. With awful clarity I saw myself suddenly as I was. Great God, that I could have been so self-centred, so arrogant!

How long I had been walking I don't know, but the drone of aircraft had ceased and the all-clear must have sounded.

So Peter had been right. It was impossible to look only to oneself, to take from life and not to give. He had known, and the others had known, that no price was too dear to achieve this victory.

But what could I do? I wanted to seize a gun and fire it, hit somebody, break a window, anything. I saw the months ahead of me, hospital, hospital, hospital, operation after operation, and I was in despair. Somehow I got myself home, undressed, and fell into a troubled sleep. But I did not rest; when I awoke the problem was still within me, beating insistently in my mind.

For the present, at least I could write. I could tell how my self-centred delusions had been swept away by what I had experienced. I would write for these men who had taught me the truth, for Peter and for the others. And to whom would I address this book? That too I knew. To that humanity I had once professed to ignore.

If I could do this thing, I would have justified, at least in some measure, my right to fellowship with my dead, and to the friendship of those with courage and steadfastness who were still living, and who would go on fighting until the ideals for which their comrades had died were stamped for ever on the future of civilization.

Condensed from the book "The Last Enemy," published by Macmillan, London

Miss Victoria

By Patricia Strauss

IN THE GREY drabness of Lambeth, the house with the yellow door stood out like a bright smile on a rainy day. During the early years of the war three maiden ladies lived in this house—the Drummond sisters, known to neighbours as Miss Jean, Miss Frances and Miss Victoria. They were charming, simple people, fond of animals and often to be seen working in their little garden.

Miss Victoria was tall, with a strong, gentle face, a quiet voice, and a painfully shy manner. Every now and then Miss Victoria went away. The neighbours assumed that she was visiting friends.

One morning in 1941 the people of Lambeth woke up to find Miss Victoria's name in the headlines. Lloyd's had awarded her its medal—the highest award that can be given to men of the merchant navy, and one never before bestowed on a woman. Also, the King was conferring upon her the MBE. Miss Victoria, the papers noted, was the only qualified woman engineer in the British Merchant Service. The neighbours could scarcely believe that the fastidious, retiring Miss Victoria had spent many months of her life in the hot, oily, noisy engine-rooms of tramp ships.

From childhood Miss Victoria had shown a most ungirlish interest in engineering. Her Scottish parents, who must have been very understanding people, allowed her to serve an apprenticeship in a factory in Dundee. Actual contact with engines did not "cure" her of her unusual passion. She went to sea and served for a time

as third engineer on a Blue Funnel Line boat running to Australia.

When war was declared she gave up a good job on land and signed on with the Merchant Navy. All through Dunkirk she worked unfalteringly in the engine-room of her ship. Then she went quietly back to her little house.

Later the crew of the *Bonita*, a merchant ship bound for America, were amazed to find that their second engineer was a woman. They were more amazed to discover that she was no amateur, that she could get greater speed from the engines than anyone else ever had. When they asked her to explain, she said: "Oh, I just talk nicely to them. You can coax or lead engines—you must never drive them." Which is not the kind of answer sailors understand. But forty-eight hours after they left port the crew owed their lives to Miss Victoria.

The *Bonita* was 400 miles from land when a Nazi four-engined bomber swooped down for the kill. Miss Victoria rushed to the engine-room. The first bomb explosion flung her heavily against the levers. She picked herself up, called together the engine-room crew and gave them an order. It consisted of just two words: "Get out!" She gave them a chance for their lives but stayed down there herself.

An unarmed vessel has only one defence against a bomber. The ship must keep a steady course until the plane is in bombing position. Then the helm must be swung hard over so that the ship moves out of the path of the bomb. It is a matter of inches and seconds. Increased speed from the engine-room would give the captain a chance to turn the clumsy hulk quickly and thus outsmart the bomber overhead. And Miss Victoria was alone down in the engine-room. One of the ship's officers, recounting the adventure afterwards, said:

"In ten minutes she had 'talked' to those engines to such good purpose that our miserable speed of nine knots had risen to twelve-and-a-half. The bombing fractured pipes, split electric wires and broke tubes. The main engine stop-valve started a joint, and scalding steam whizzed past her head. With anyone less skilled down there,

Alone in the engine-room of an unarmed merchantman, Victoria Drummond kept the damaged machinery working through a bombing raid. She was awarded the Lloyd's War Medal (below). The citation recorded that "her devotion to duty saved the ship from more serious damage and her disregard of danger inspired all on board"

that pipe might have burst under the extra pressure, but she nursed it through each explosion, easing down when she judged from the nearness of the plane's engines that the bombs were about to fall, holding on to a stanchion as they burst, and then opening up the steam again.

"I saw her once when I looked down the skylight to shout a few words of cheer to her. She was standing on the control platform, surrounded by spent machine-gun bullets which had fallen through the skylight, one hand stretched straight above her head holding down the throttle control as if trying by her touch to urge another pound of steam through the straining pipes. Her face, as expressionless as the bulkhead behind her, was turned up towards the sunlight, but she did not see me. From the top of her forehead down her long face, completely closing one eye, trickled a wide black streak of fuel oil."

Three times the ship's swing, under increased speed, prevented the bomber from driving home the final, death-dealing blow. Finally, bombs and ammunition exhausted, he flew away. Miss Victoria eased down the speed. The boats and decks were shattered and the ship was making water. But they were still afloat.

When the *Bonita* docked in Virginia, the people of Norfolk heard the story from the men (Miss Victoria herself would never say a word about the affair). Greatly impressed, they sent 2,500 dollars to the Mayor of Lambeth to buy a mobile canteen—the "Victoria Drummond Canteen"—for use in air raids.

Condensed from Vogue

The Prisoners of Differdange

By Edwin Muller

FOR FIFTEEN years certain people in the town of Differdange, Luxembourg, had been trying to find a certain German. They had a score to settle with him.

They knew his name, Johann Punzel. They knew his serial number in the German Army, and the fact that he had been a member of the Nazi Party. But, until 3rd June 1955, they never got hold of him.

The thing that Punzel had done, the reason why they were looking for him, happened in the spring of 1940. The war in Poland was over, the vast armies of Germany and the Western Allies faced each other along the Maginot Line, and Differdange lay between. But Luxembourg was neutral and the townspeople of Differdange hoped that the German invasion would never take place.

Then, at dawn on 10th May, they were wakened by the roar of planes. They looked up at a sky full of parachutes. The Germans had come. Soon the French came too. Columns of their cavalry rode out from the Maginot Line and occupied the town.

By the time the first shots were fired, the roads from Differdange were jammed with fugitives. The Hadir steelworks, which employed 4,000 of the town's 15,000 inhabitants, closed down. But one group of employees was called together: the forty-odd steelworkers who also did duty as a fire brigade. They were free to go, the works manager said, but shells might hit the steelworks and

start fires. It was to the advantage of the town that the property be preserved. He called for volunteers.

After a moment's silence, Joseph Weiler, a works foreman and chief of the brigade, stepped forward. "I will stay," he said.

Fourteen others volunteered, among them Nicolas Wallers, an ambulance man of the company's infirmary. Wallers's wife insisted on staying too. Someone, she said, would have to prepare food for the men. Later three more men joined the group, bringing the total number to eighteen.

They settled down in the air raid shelter under the main office building. Through the thick walls they could hear the noise of machine-gun fire and exploding shells. The battle lasted two days. Then, on the night of 11th May the French left and the German paratroopers poured in, followed by tanks and artillery.

At first the Germans treated the firemen in a not-unfriendly way. There was work for them to do; cleaning up debris, burying dead animals, even extinguishing a few fires that broke out in houses where careless soldiers were billeted.

Then, after two weeks, there was a sudden change. On 27th and 28th May, Differdange was bombarded heavily from the Maginot Line. The fire was extraordinarily accurate. With uncanny precision the shells found the German ammunition dumps and the areas where tanks and other heavy equipment were camouflaged. Great damage was done.

Late on the night of the 29th a detail of military police went to the air raid shelter and kicked the sleeping firemen awake. They searched everybody in the room, including Mrs. Wallers. With detection equipment they checked all wires and electrical outlets in the room; they tested the walls with hammers. At last they went away, but guards were posted round the factory. The firemen could no longer move about freely.

At intervals the bombardment continued. Three days later the military police came again to the steelworks and ordered the firemen to assemble in the street. In double file they were marched

past a place where soldiers were digging a big hole. The same horrible thought occurred to more than one of the firemen; the hole was big enough to contain eighteen bodies.

Farther on they were halted at a cement wall next to a small garage, and lined up. A lieutenant appeared, a hard-faced man with a duelling scar on one cheek. He walked slowly down the line, staring each one in the face. Then he spoke:

"We have established that one or more of you have sent signals to the enemy, enabling them to direct their fire. If the guilty person or persons do not confess, all of you will be shot."

The group was then locked in the garage. It was dimly lit by one barred window. The damp concrete floor was ten by fourteen feet. Mrs. Wallers clung to her husband, sobbing. Some of the men also wept; others were on their knees, praying.

Weiler spoke up in a firm voice: "Has anyone anything to say about the charge which has been made?"

Nobody had. But some began hysterically accusing others. Weiler's voice cut through the discord: "Pull yourselves together. We can get out of this only if we face the Germans like men."

The hubbub subsided. Time dragged on. At last the door opened and the lieutenant appeared. "Are the guilty ready to confess?" Silence. "Very well. The execution will take place in one hour."

The lieutenant beckoned to a corporal, a fair-haired, blue-eyed man of about thirty. "Corporal Punzel, you will guard these men until their execution. When the hour has passed they are to be brought out two at a time. Their grave has been dug."

The corporal saluted and the door was closed.

JOHANN PUNZEL was born in 1910 in the Bavarian town of Pressig, where his parents had a delicatessen shop. In the First World War his elder brother was killed.

Then came the 1920's, when wild inflation nearly destroyed the middle class of Germany. The Punzel family went steadily downhill. In that decade the worst off were the youth of Germany. Their

lives were frustrated and despairing. No way to earn a living, nowhere to go. The suicide rate rose.

Johann alternated between occasional jobs and helping with the dying delicatessen shop. In those days Hitler seemed a ray of hope to youths like Johann. He joined the Nazi Party when he was seventeen. He saw and heard Hitler, and was carried away by the glamour of that evil genius.

Presently he got a full-time clerical job at Party branch headquarters in Pressig. At the time war came Johann was married to a pretty, dark-haired girl. They had two babies. He was called into the army and did well. When his regiment, the 330th Infantry, marched into Differdange he was a corporal.

PUNZEL stood outside the garage door, somewhat confused. An order was still an order and had to be carried out. But those people there—the woman he could hear sobbing .... He decided to "pass the buck." Leaving guards posted, he hurried off to find Lieutenant Kelch, the regimental adjutant. Kelch was too busy to be bothered. "The matter belongs in the judge advocate's office," he said. "Go and see them about the sentence."

Punzel went back to the prisoners. They surrounded him, clamouring that they were innocent. Joseph Weiler quietened them and told Punzel that the charge was without foundation, that none of them had had any opportunity to signal the French.

"You have searched the air raid shelter. Cannot a further search be made?"

Punzel was impressed. And then it occurred to him that the lieutenant had spoken of carrying out the sentence against "these men." He had said nothing about the woman. He pulled Mrs. Wallers outside and found a Wehrmacht lorry bound for the town of Luxembourg. He put her into it and the lorry drove away.

At the judge advocate's office Punzel asked the lieutenant in charge if the sentence could not be deferred until a further search for evidence could be made. To his surprise the officer said he

would look into the matter and told him to come back in three-quarters of an hour.

When Punzel returned the answer was: "No. The sentence is to be carried out unless the guilty confess. But it has been decided to reprieve them for twenty-four hours. However, if the French bombardment is resumed the prisoners are to be shot at once."

Punzel was more and more troubled. By now he was convinced that the men were innocent. But he could do nothing to save them.

Some little things he could do. He moved the prisoners from the damp garage to a dry store-room across the street. He had food and hot coffee taken to them from a regimental canteen.

That night Punzel slept badly. He kept listening for the French bombardment—which would mean the immediate death of the prisoners. But they would die anyway next afternoon. . . .

Next morning he went again to see the prisoners. They had nothing to say except to plead for mercy. Presently Punzel went to the judge advocate's office, not to see the lieutenant but to make sure he was away at lunch. Then the corporal went back to the store-room, noting that there were no soldiers near by except the guards, his own men. He had some words with them. They looked at him curiously.

Punzel went into the room and asked one of the prisoners if he could get a lorry at the steelworks. The man stared at him stupidly, but finally said that he could. Punzel sent two of the guards with him.

When the lorry arrived Punzel went into the room and spoke hurriedly: "You are free, all of you. Get into the lorry quickly."

At first stunned silence, then a bedlam of laughing and sobbing. They crowded round him, tried to shake his hand, to give him their watches and money. He shook them off.

"Be quiet. Get into the lorry and go."

Nicolas Kremer, the youngest of the firemen, asked for his name. He gave it and his serial number, 105275A. Then the lorry drove off towards Luxembourg.

Back in his quarters Punzel shook all over as if with a chill. Now

the thing he had done seemed incredible. He was sure to be found out. Perhaps his own men would report him—though several of them had congratulated him. In any case the firing squad would soon come and he would be done for.

But Punzel was lucky. Within an hour a general order came through: the 330th was to move up to the Maginot Line. In the commotion that followed, nobody thought of enquiring about the firemen of Differdange. . . . Nobody ever did.

PUNZEL never disobeyed another order; he ended the war as a second-lieutenant. He went back to Pressig, to the dreary business of trying to make a living for himself and his family in a beaten and despairing country. He had another go at the family delicatessen shop. It failed. He had jobs, but they didn't last long.

In 1946 he was notified that he was under investigation by a Military Government court because of his former Party membership. After some thought he wrote to the Management of Mines in Differdange, telling them who he was and what he had done in the matter of the firemen. He never had an answer. But later he was notified by the court that he had been cleared.

THE FLEEING firemen found refuge with their families or friends and went into hiding. After the fall of France in 1940 it seemed safe to return to Differdange. Some of the men went back to their old jobs in the steelworks, now under German management.

There was much speculation as to who had sent the signals to the French. The truth was never established.

Joseph Weiler died of a heart attack. So did Mrs. Wallers. Young Nic Kremer rose in the world, went into politics after the war and was elected to the Luxembourg Parliament. He was the one who concerned himself with finding Johann Punzel. But in the disorganization of defeated Germany, it proved impossible to trace a soldier through his name and serial number.

Then Kremer heard of the letter Punzel had written to the

Management of Mines. Kremer wrote to the Military Government, stating the facts of the case, but had no reply—though his letter later proved to have been helpful in getting the charge against Punzel dropped. But when he tried to trace Punzel through the Military Government he got nowhere.

After many unsuccessful attempts over a period of years, Kremer tried writing to the police of various German cities. In the spring of 1955 the Nuremberg police sent him Punzel's address in Pressig.

Kremer wrote to Punzel, inviting him to visit Differdange for a reunion with his former prisoners. Punzel, touched and incredulous at this surprising turn of events, replied that he would come.

Punzel and his wife arrived at Differdange on 3rd June 1955, the fifteenth anniversary of the prisoners' release. The surviving firemen had contributed to an entertainment fund, and so had the management of the steelworks.

For three weeks the Punzels lived in a happy daze. At a big party, the first of many, a vast amount of food was set forth, toasts were drunk and a gold watch inscribed "Als Dank Für Hilfe 3.6.1940" (In Grateful Recognition of Help 3.6.1940) was presented amid thunderous applause. There were motor trips, more gifts, and invitations everywhere for lunch and dinner.

Punzel was received by the Luxembourg Minister of Justice, who thanked him in the name of the government for what he had done. One Sunday there was a special service in the principal church of Differdange. The pastor—who had spent three years in a concentration camp—preached a sermon of gratitude to Punzel, and the choir sang a hymn in his honour. Punzel broke down and wept.

Back at home, Punzel obtained a job with a publishing firm. Perhaps his visit to Luxembourg gave him the psychological boost he needed. At any rate, he hasn't needed to avail himself of the offer made by Luxembourg's Minister of Justice: "If things don't work out for you," he said, "come back here and we'll get you a good job."

Miracle at Dunkirk

By Arthur Divine

There was from first to last a queer medieval sense of miracle about the Dunkirk affair. You remember the old quotation about the miracle that crushed the Spanish Armada, "God sent a wind." This time "God withheld the wind." Had we had one on-shore breeze of any strength at all in the first days, we would have lost 100,000 men.

The pier at Dunkirk was the unceasing target of bombs and shell-fire throughout, yet it was never hit. Two hundred and fifty thousand men embarked from that pier. Had it been blasted. . . .

The whole thing from first to last was covered with that same strange feeling of something supernatural. We muddled, we quarrelled, everybody swore and was bad-tempered and made the wildest accusations of inefficiency and worse in high places. Boats were badly handled and broke down, arrangements went wrong.

And yet out of all that mess we beat the experts, we defied the law and the prophets, and where the Government and the Board of Admiralty had hoped to bring away 30,000 men, we brought away 335,000. If that was not a miracle, there are no miracles left.

When I heard small boats of all sorts were to be used at Dunkirk, I volunteered at once, having no vast opinion of the navy as small-boat handlers. I had been playing with the navy off and on ever since the beginning of the year, mine-sweeping and submarine

hunting, convoying and so on. So friends of mine at the Admiralty passed me through without formalities, and within two hours of my first telephone call I was on my way to Sheerness. From Sheerness I acted as navigator for a party of small boats round to Ramsgate, and at Ramsgate we started the real work. The evacuation went on for something over a week, but to me the most exciting time was the night before the last.

I was given a motor-boat about as long as my drawing-room at home, thirty feet. She had one cabin forward and the rest was open, but she had twin engines and was fairly fast. For crew we had one sub-lieutenant, one stoker and one gunner. For armament we had two Bren guns—one my own particular favourite which I had stolen—and some rifles. In command of our boat we had a real live Admiral.

We first went out to French fishing boats gathered off Ramsgate, boats from Caen and Le Havre, bright little vessels with lovely names—*Ciel de France*, *Ave Maria Gratia Plena*, *Jeanne Antoine*. They had helped at Calais and Boulogne and in the preceding days at Dunkirk, and the men were very tired, but when we passed them new orders they set out again for Dunkirk.

They went as the leaders of the procession, for they were slow. With them went a handful of Dutch *schouts*, stumpy little coasting vessels commandeered at the collapse of Holland, each flying the white ensign of the Royal Navy, sparkling new, and each fitted with a Lewis gun. Next went coasters, colliers, paddle steamers that in time of peace had taken holiday-makers round the harbour for a shilling a time, tugs towing mud scows with fine brave names like *Gallions Reach* and *Queen's Channel*.

There was a car ferry, surely on its first trip in the open sea. There were yachts; one the *Skylark*—what a name for such a mission! There were dockyard tugs, towing barges. There were sloops, minesweepers, trawlers, destroyers. There were Thames fire floats, Belgian drifters, lifeboats from all round the coast, lifeboats from sunken ships. I saw the boats of the old *Dunbar Castle*, sunk eight

months before. Rolling and pitching in a cloud of spray were open speedboats, wholly unsuited for the Channel chop.

There was the old *Brighton Belle* that carried holiday crowds in the days before the Boer War. She swept mines in the Great War, and she swept mines in this war through all the fury of last winter. I know; I sailed with her then. Coming back from her second trip to Dunkirk, she struck the wreck of a ship sunk by a magnetic mine and slowly sank. Her captain, a Conservative Party agent in civil life, got 400 men safely off and at the last even saved his dog.

There was never such a fleet went to war before, I think. As I went round the western arm of the harbour near sunset, passing out orders, it brought my heart into my throat to watch them leave. They were so small! Little boats like those you see in the bight of Sandy Hook fishing on a fine afternoon. Some were frowzy, with old car tyres for fenders, and some of them were bright with paint and chromium—little white boats that were soon lost to view across the ruffled water. And as they went there came round from the foreland a line of fishing boats—shrimp catchers and what not, from the east coast—to join the parade.

When this armada of oddments was under way, we followed with the faster boats—Royal Air Force rescue launches, picket boats and the like—and with us went an X-lighter, a flatboat, paraffin-powered, built for landing troops at Gallipoli and a veteran of *that* evacuation more than twenty years ago.

It was the queerest, most nondescript flotilla that ever was, and it was manned by every kind of Englishman, never more than two men, often only one, to each small boat. They were bankers and dentists, taxi drivers and yachtsmen, dockers, boys, engineers, fishermen and civil servants. There were bright-faced sea scouts and old men whose skins looked fiery red against their white hair. Many were poor; they had no coats, but made do with old jerseys and sweaters. They wore cracked rubber boots. They were wet, chilled to the bone, hungry; they were unarmed and unprotected, and they sailed towards the pillars

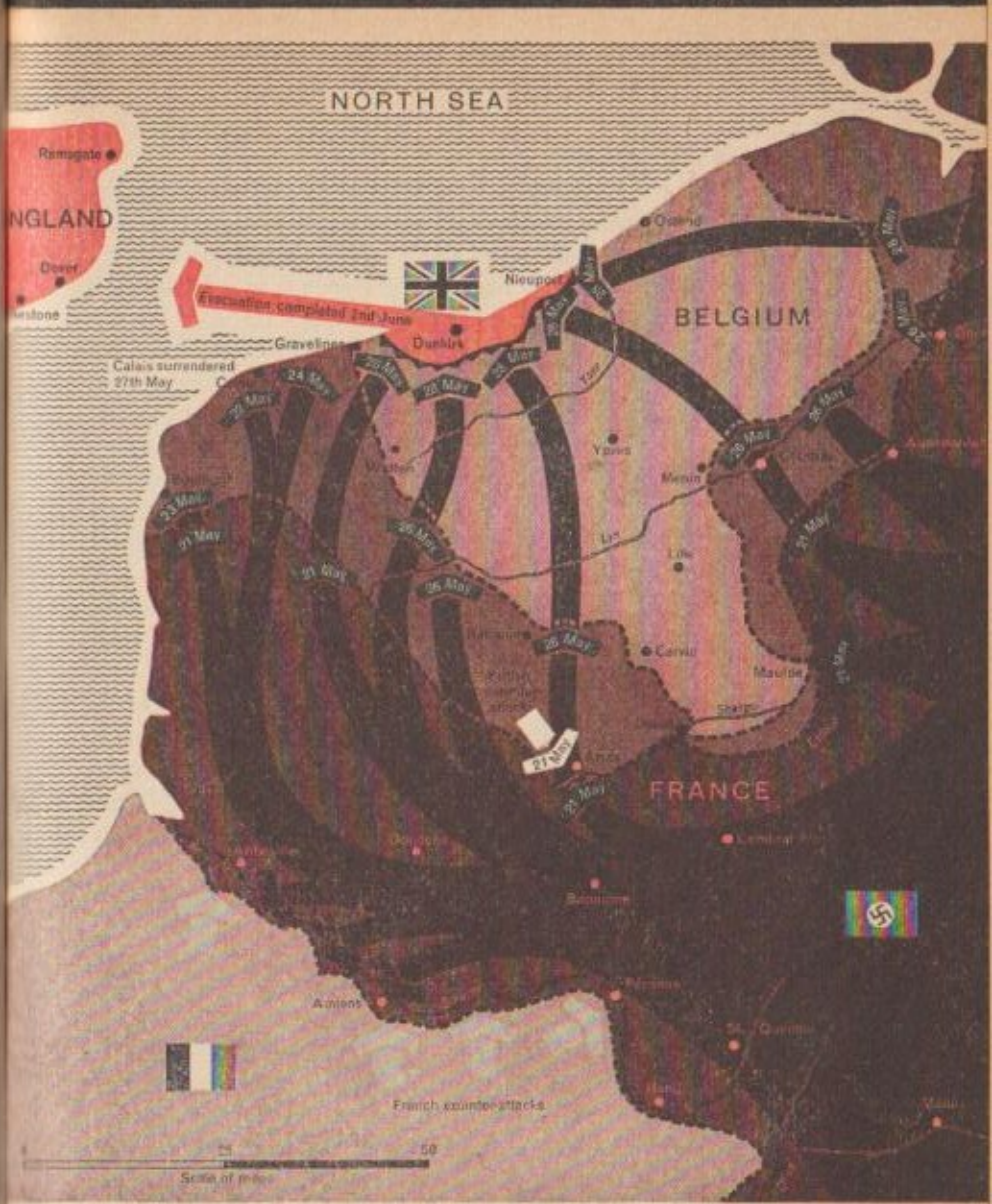
of smoke and fire and the thunder of the guns, into waters already slick with the oil of sunken boats, knowing perfectly well the special kind of hell ahead. Still, they went, plugging gamely along.

I had a feeling, then and after, that this was something bigger than organization, something bigger than the mere requisitioning of boats. In a sense it was the naval spirit that has always been the foundation of Britain's greatness, flowering again and flowering superbly. I believe 848 was the official figure for the total of boats that took part over the ten days of the evacuation. But I think there were more than a thousand craft in all. I myself know of fishermen who never registered, waited for no orders, but, all unofficial, went and brought back soldiers. Quietly, like that.

It was dark before we were well clear of the English coast. It wasn't rough, but there was a little chop on, sufficient to make it very wet and we were soon soaked to the skin. Soon, in the dark, the big boats began to overtake us. We were in a sort of dark traffic lane full of strange ghosts and weird, unaccountable waves from the wake of the larger vessels. When destroyers went by, travelling at top speed, the wash was a serious matter to us little fellows. We could only spin the wheel to try to head into the waves, hang on, and hope for the best.

Mere navigation was dangerous in the dark. Clouds hung low and blotted out the stars. We carried no lights, we had no signals, no means of recognition of friend or foe. Before we were half-way across we began to meet the first of the returning stream. We dodged white, glimmering bow waves of vessels that had passed astern, only to fall into the way of half-seen shapes ahead. There were shouts in the darkness, but only occasionally the indignant stutter of a horn. We went "by guess and by God."

From the half-way mark, too, there were destroyers on patrol crossing our line of passage, weaving a fantastic warp of foam through the web of our progress. There were collisions, of course. Dover for days afterwards was full of destroyers with bows stove in, coasting vessels with great gashes amidships, ships battered,



The German sweep to the Channel, 1940

British Forces
French Forces
German Forces
Advance by German Forces 21st May
Advance by German Forces 26th May
Advance by German Forces 29th May

scraped and scarred. The miracle is that there were not ten for every one that happened.

Even before it was fully dark we had picked up the glow of the Dunkirk flames, and now as we drew nearer the sailing got better, for we could steer by them and see silhouetted the shapes of other ships, of boats coming home already loaded, and of low dark shadows that might be the enemy motor torpedo boats.

Then aircraft started dropping parachute flares. We saw them hanging all about us in the night, like young moons. The sound of the firing and the bombing was with us always, growing steadily louder as we got nearer and nearer. The flames grew, too. From a glow they rose up to enormous plumes of fire that roared high into the everlasting pall of smoke. As we approached Dunkirk there was an air attack on the destroyers and for a little the night was brilliant with bursting bombs and the fountain sprays of tracer bullets.

The beach, black with men and illuminated by the fires, seemed a perfect target, but no doubt the thick clouds of smoke were a useful screen.

When we got to the neighbourhood of the mole there was a lull. The aircraft had dispersed and apparently had done no damage, for there was nothing sinking. They had been there before, however, and the place was a shambles of old wrecks, British and French, and all kinds of odds and ends. The breakwaters and lighthouse were magnificently silhouetted against the flames of burning oil tanks—enormous flames that licked high above the town. Farther in-shore and to the east of the docks the town itself was burning furiously, but down near the beach where we were going there was no sign of fire and we could see row upon row of houses standing silent and apparently empty.

We had just got to the eastward of the pier when shelling started up. There was one battery down between La Panne and Nieuport that our people simply could not find and its shooting was uncannily accurate. Our place was in the corner of the beach at the mole and as they were shelling the mole, the firing was right over

our heads. Nothing, however, came close to us in the first spell.

The picture will always remain sharp-etched in my memory—the lines of men wearily and sleepily staggering across the beach from the dunes to the shallows, falling into little boats; great columns of men thrust out into the water among bomb and shell splashes. The foremost ranks were shoulder deep, moving forward under the command of young subalterns, themselves with their heads just above the little waves that rode in to the sand. As the front ranks were dragged aboard the boats, the rear ranks moved up, from ankle deep to knee deep, from knee deep to waist deep, until they, too, came to shoulder depth and their turn.

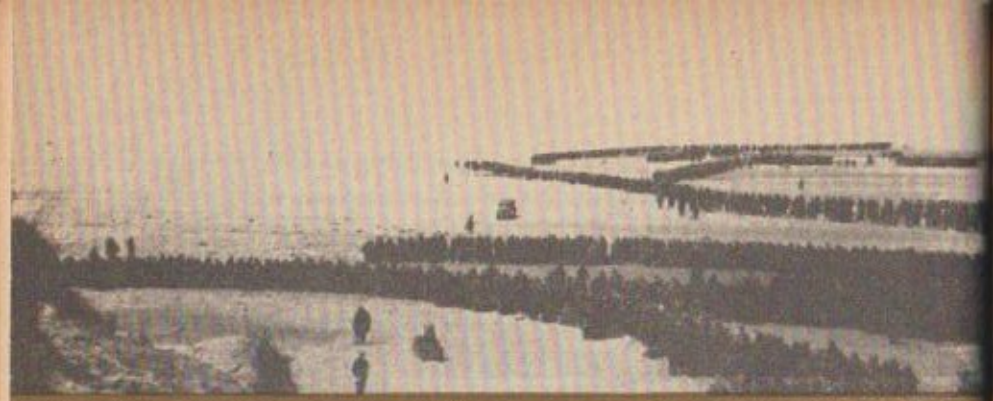
Some of the big boats pushed in until they were almost aground, taking appalling risks with the falling tide. The men thankfully scrambled up the sides on rope nets, or climbed the hundreds of ladders, made God knows where out of new, raw wood and hurried aboard the ships in England.

The little boats that ferried from the beach to the big ships in deep water listed drunkenly with the weight of men. The big ships slowly took on lists of their own with the enormous numbers crowded aboard. And always down the dunes and across the beach came new hordes of men, new columns, new lines.

On the beach was the skeleton of a destroyer, bombed and burnt. At the water's edge were ambulances, abandoned when their last load had been discharged.

There was always the red background, the red of Dunkirk burning. There was no water to check the fires and there were no men to be spared to fight them. Red, too, were the shell bursts, the flash of guns, the fountains of tracer bullets.

The din was infernal. The batteries shelled ceaselessly and brilliantly. To the whistle of shells overhead was added the scream of falling bombs. Even the sky was full of noise—anti-aircraft shells, machine-gun fire, the snarl of falling planes, the angry hornet noise of dive bombers. One could not speak normally at any time against the roar of it and the noise of our own engines. We all developed

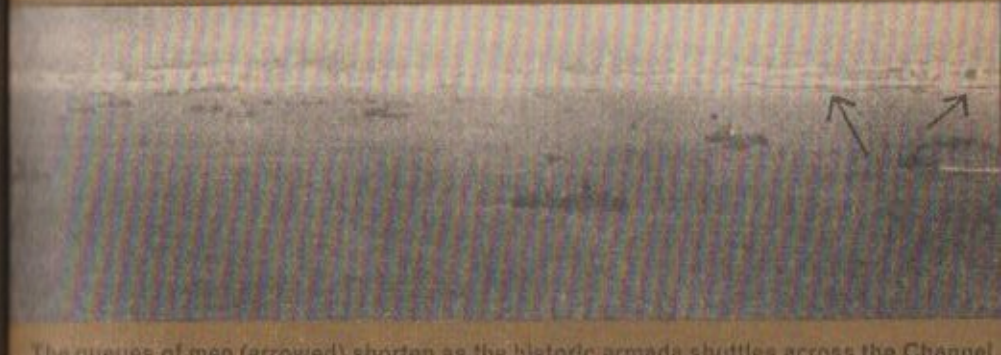


Above: Long lines of men wait on the beaches of Dunkirk for evacuation

Left: A sitting target for German dive-bombers, the men on the beaches despairingly pit their rifles against the Stukas

Right: After their gallant mission, the small craft of the nondescript navy are towed back to their Thames moorings

Left: A survivor has only pyjama trousers and a blanket to wear, but he and his colleagues have safely reached Dover



The queues of men (arrowed) shorten as the historic armada shuttles across the Channel

After forty years of holiday cruising, the *Brighton Belle* was sunk (below) returning from Dunkirk

"Dunkirk throat," a sore hoarseness that was the hallmark of those who had been there.

Yet through all the noise I will always remember the voices of the young subalterns as they sent their men aboard, and I will remember, too, the astonishing discipline of the men. They had fought through three weeks of retreat, always falling back, often without orders, often without support. Transport had failed. They had gone sleepless. They had been without food and water. Yet they kept ranks as they came down the beaches, and they obeyed commands.

Veterans of Gallipoli and of Mons agreed this was the hottest spot they had ever been in, yet morale held. I was told stories of French troops that rushed the boats at first so that stern measures had to be taken, but I saw nothing like that. The Frenchmen I brought off were of the rear guard, fine soldiers, still fighting fit.

Having the Admiral on board, we were not actually working the beaches but were in control of operations. We moved about as necessary, and after we had spent some time putting small boats in touch with their towing boats, the battery off Nieuport way began to drop shells on us. It seemed pure spite. The nearest salvo was about twenty yards astern, which was close enough.

We stayed there until everybody else had been sent back, and then went pottering about looking for stragglers. While we were doing that, a salvo of shells got one of our troopships alongside the mole. She was hit clean in the boilers and exploded in one terrific crash. There were then, I suppose, about 1,000 Frenchmen on the mole. We had seen them crowding along its narrow crest, outlined against the flames. They had gone out under shellfire to board the boat, and now they had to go back again, still being shelled. It was quite the most tragic thing I have ever seen in my life. We could do nothing with our little park dinghy.

While they were still filing back to the beach and the dawn was breaking with uncomfortable brilliance, we found one of our stragglers—a navy whaler. We told her people to come aboard, but they said that there was a motor-boat aground and they would have to

fetch off her crew. They went in, and we waited. It was my longest wait, ever. For various reasons they were terribly slow. When they found the captain of the motor-boat, they stood and argued with him and he wouldn't come off anyway. Damned plucky chap. He and his men lay quiet until the tide floated them later in the day. Then they made a dash for it, and got away.

We waited for them until the sun was up before we got clear of the mole. By then, the fighting was heavy in-shore, on the outskirts of the town, and actually in some of the streets.

Going home, the dive bombers came over us five times, but somehow left us alone though three times they took up an attacking position. A little down the coast, towards Gravelines, we picked up a boatload of Frenchmen rowing off. We took them aboard. They were very much bothered as to where our "ship" was, said quite flatly that it was impossible to go to England in a thing like ours. Too, too horribly dangerous!

One of the rare touches of comedy at Dunkirk was the fear of the sea among French *poilus* from inland towns. They were desperately afraid to forfeit solid land for the unknown perils of a little boat. When, on the last nights of the evacuation, the little boats got to the mole many refused to jump in, despite the hell of exploding shells and bombs behind them. I saw young sub-lieutenants grab *poilus* by the collar and the seat of the trousers and rush them over the side into waiting launches.

There was comedy of a sort, too, in the misadventures of the boats. The yachting season hadn't begun and most of the pleasure boats had been at their winter moorings when the call came; their engines had not been serviced and they broke down in the most awkward places. The water supply at Dunkirk had been bombed out of use in the first days, and the navy ferried water across to keep the troops alive. Some of the water went in proper water cans, but most of it was put into two-gallon petrol tins. *Of course* some of these tins got into the petrol dumps, with lamentable results. I ran out of fuel myself in the angle between Dunkirk mole and the beach, with

heavy shelling going on and an Admiral on board. He never even said "damn." But we were lucky. A *schout* with spare fuel was lying a mile or so from the beach, near a buoy. I got to her with my last drop of reserve.

Then, for grim humour, there is the tale of the young sub-lieutenant, no more than a boy, whom I saw from time to time on one side of the Channel or the other. He was sent in the early days of the show to the beach east of Gravelines, where he was told there was a pocket of British troops cut off. He landed at the beach with only a revolver and walked off into the sand dunes to hunt for them. In the darkness he suddenly saw two faint shapes moving and called out, "Here we are boys, come to take you off."

There was silence, and then a guttural, "*Lieber Gott!*"

"So," the boy told me, "I shot them and came away."

He had walked right into the German Army.

One of the greatest surprises of the whole operation was the failure of the German E-boats—motor torpedo boats. We crossed by a path that was well lit by light buoys, spread the whole way across from the Goodwin Sands to the Dunkirk Roads. Well-handled E-boats could have got among us in the darkness and played havoc—either in the Channel or in Dunkirk Roads.

I had stopped once off one of the light buoys when a division of destroyers passed me. They could see me only as a small dark shape on the water, if at all, and had I had torpedoes I could have picked off the leaders. I might have been a German motor-boat, and if the German navy had any real fighting spirit I ought to have been a German motor-boat. They did send a few boats in, and I believe they claimed one of our destroyers somewhere off La Panne, but they never pressed the attack home with any vigour, never came in force against our motley armada off the beaches. The German Navy lost a great chance.

Germany, in fact, failed in three ways at Dunkirk. Against a routed army she failed on land to drive home her advantage, though she had strategic and numerical superiority. She failed in the

air, though with half a million men narrowed into one small semi-circle, she should have been able—if air power ever could be decisive—to secure decisive victory. And at sea, her motor-boats were so lamentably handled that we almost disregarded them. For long hours on end we were sheep for the slaughtering, but we got back to Ramsgate safely each time. There we watched the debarkations, two and three hundred men from each of the larger boats marching in an endless brown stream down the narrow curve of the east harbour wall. Among each load would be five or six wounded. The hospital ships went in to Dover; at Ramsgate we saw mainly the pitiful survivors of ships bombed on the way over—men with their skin flayed by oil burns, torn by bomb splinters or wounded by machine-gun fire from the air. Most of them were still unbandaged and almost untended. They were put ashore just as they had been pulled from the water, the most pitiful wrecks of men. Yet they were surprisingly few.

Well, that's the story of Dunkirk, as I saw it. We were to learn in the weeks that followed that the Straits of Dover are the best tank trap the world has ever devised.

Hero When He Had to Be

By Edwin Muller

THAT NIGHT in 1941 as Max Manus climbed the stairs to his flat, he had no premonition that the police would be there waiting for him.

Of course he was never entirely free from the feeling that they would get him one day. The Norwegian Resistance Movement was still new, but Max had few illusions about his chances. Either there would be a knock on his door in the middle of the night or, as he walked through the streets of Oslo, he would hear the curt command: "Halt! Your papers."

As he opened his door and went into the dark hall, they jumped on him before he had time to turn on the light. There were six of them: Norwegian *statspolitti.*

They took away the gun in the holster under his armpit and the other one strapped to his leg. Then they tore the rucksack off his back. In it were papers that held damning evidence. What could he do? He had grenades hidden in the bathroom. They let him in there, but two of them went with him, keeping close. No chance to get the grenades.

Back in the room the leader was going through the papers. Max measured the distance to the window with his eye. Then, glancing towards the door, he gave a fake start of surprise. Six pairs of eyes turned and in that instant Max dived through the blackout paper and the glass pane and crashed on to the pavement two floors below.

He came to in the hospital. As he struggled into consciousness he heard a voice saying: "But it would be stupid to take this man to be shot. He will die here—and soon. His back is broken."

Max drifted into unconsciousness.

When he came to again a nurse was there, and a doctor too. The doctor bent down and whispered: "You are not going to die. Your back is not broken—only two vertebrae loose. Before long you will be able to move."

Day and night the *statspoliti* kept two guards posted outside the door and the doctor told Max that he was having trouble in convincing the police that he was too ill to be moved. "They say they'll not wait much longer to try you."

Soon Max was able to get out of bed. Cautiously he practised taking a few steps.

The window of his room was boarded up because of air raids. But at the top was a hinged section. Max calculated that if he could climb up there he might just squeeze through. When the nurse came in to attend to his dressings he gave her a name and an address and long whispered instructions.

Next day when the nurse entered she was walking with a stiff leg. She had brought a short fishing rod, with reel and line. She told Max the escape was set for that night, at 3 a.m.

From midnight onward Max kept looking impatiently at his watch. Finally it was 2.50. He got out of bed, took the fishing rod out of the cupboard, attached the lead sinker to the line and let it down through the window. It was then 2.55. At exactly 3 a.m. he felt a tug on the line.

So far, so good.

Max reeled in the line. Attached to its end was a rope, which he tied to the bed. Then he scrambled up and squeezed through the window opening.

It was snowing and as he slid down the rope an icy wind tore open his hospital shirt and struck his bare back like a whiplash. His friends caught him, hurried him to a car and wrapped him in warm

blankets. As they drove through the dark streets they heard the scream of the police cars arriving at the hospital.

THE *statspoliti* never caught Max Manus again. He lived to become the most renowned hero of the Norwegian Resistance.

This slight man, with sandy hair and gentle, blue eyes, almost single-handed sank ships, blew up munition factories, terrorized the Nazi invaders. He became a hero but never, in the long years of German occupation, did fear leave him for a moment.

After his escape from the hospital Max was ordered to London for a course in advanced sabotage. That journey took him seven months. From Norway, dodging the frontier guards, he went on skis across the snowy passes into Sweden, thence by train to Odessa, then to Istanbul, where he had a narrow escape from Nazi agents. (By then he was a marked man.) He went on to Suez, down the Red Sea, round the Cape and across the Atlantic to America and so eventually to Britain.

In London Max's course in sabotage included the use of "limpets," flat tin cases of high explosive, to be attached by magnets to a ship's hull below the water-line.

He was dropped by parachute in the snow-covered mountains of Norway and made his way on foot to Oslo. Fear hung over the city like a fog. The secret police, Germans and Norwegian Quislings, were everywhere. People walked about the streets in silence, afraid to talk openly to their best friends. But Max made contact with the Resistance and soon he was back at the stealthy, dangerous work of the saboteur. On orders from the Resistance leaders in Britain, several factories working for the Nazis were destroyed: an aircraft factory, acid factories, an oil reserve plant, a ball-bearing factory, a locomotive works and even the administration building of the Norwegian Railways.

In most of these operations Max took a leading part.

Perhaps the most dangerous and exciting task was the destruction of the German troopship *Monte Rosa*.

The *Monte Rosa* ferried troops between Oslo and Germany. The Resistance men were given the job of destroying her.

The area round the dock where the *Monte Rosa* tied up was enclosed by a high barbed wire fence. There was always a guard at the gate; other guards were on the dock. When the ship was docked precautions were intensified. Hitler himself could hardly have got through the gate. Searchlights played all night on the water round the ship.

But a water-front worker suggested that under the dock were cross-beams broad enough for a man to lie on. Two men might get down there before the ship arrived from Germany, stay on the beams during the two or three days she was in port and fix explosives to her side. The charges would be timed to explode at sea.

It looked like a good plan. The only flaw was that it might cost two lives. But the Resistance decided that the *Monte Rosa* was worth the loss of those lives. Max and his friend Gregers Gram were given the job.

Dressed in worn overalls, Max and Gregers drove a delivery van up to the water-front gate. In the van were two big workmen's chests. Hidden under the tools were twelve limpet bombs.

Max explained to the guard that they had come to repair cables under the dock. They produced the proper permits. The guard examined the papers, then went to the back of the van. He opened the boxes and started to turn over the tools. Just then another van drove up fast. The driver blew the horn and shouted: "Hurry up, can't you?" The guard waved Max and Gregers on and turned angrily to deal with the second van, whose driver was a fellow member of the Resistance.

Max and Gregers deposited the two boxes in a blind passage that was never used, and drove away.

Next morning they were back on foot. They nodded casually to the guard, showed their permits and went in. Now to get the boxes under the dock—on which a German sentry stood guard.

While the sentry watched, they hauled the boxes towards a

When Crown Prince (now King) Olaf returned to Norway in 1945, Max Manus (right) was his bodyguard on the triumphal drive through Oslo

ladder that led underneath. When they got to within two feet of the ladder the sentry challenged: "What are you doing here?"

"We are to repair the cables under the dock. These things are heavy. Won't you give us a hand with them?"

The guard looked at Gregers, then at Max. Then he reached down and helped them to lift the boxes.

Under the dock they were in darkness. The beams and concrete foundations were cold and slimy to the touch. Below was the oily water in which floated garbage and refuse.

They had to get the boxes across to the other side of the dock where the *Monte Rosa* was expected to berth. It was like creeping into a cave. The timbers overhead were so low that they had to crawl on their stomachs. Nails protruding from above ripped their clothing. Then—the beams ended. It was only a gap; the beams resumed farther on. But it was impossible to swim the gap with fifty-pound chests.

For a long time they lay there on the beam. Then a thought occurred to Max. In one of their hide-outs in Oslo was a rubber boat, the kind that aircraft carry. They crawled back and scrambled up the ladder. At the gate they grinned sheepishly at the guard.

"We forgot some tools." The guard let them out.

There was a bad moment when they came back with the boat folded in the bottom of a tool kit. Would the guard inspect it? By now, however, they were a familiar sight and he waved them through. Some time later, with their boxes, they were lying on the beams on the side of the dock where the ship was expected.

They were down there for three days.

The first day was bearable. They had sandwiches and a bottle of brandy. It helped them to endure the stench. Rats scurried and squealed round them, and at night the creatures came closer. They smelt the sandwiches. Their eyes gleamed in the dark. They seemed as big as cats. Max and Gregers spent the night taking turns in fighting them off.

On the second day they heard noise and shouting overhead; then they heard a ship's whistle. Presently a great hull slid silently alongside the dock.

The *Monte Rosa* was in port for two days. Max and Gregers waited until the last moment. They waited almost too long. Working from the rubber boat, they fixed the last limpet just as the hull began to move. The suction drew the frail boat alongside and seemed about to pull it under. Max and Gregers caught hold of a beam and managed to drag themselves free. Then they cut holes in the little boat and sank it.

It was a bad moment when they climbed the ladder and thrust their heads above the dock. But fortunately no guard was looking. They scrambled out.

A few days later the news came from Britain: the *Monte Rosa* had exploded at the dock in Copenhagen. The ship was out of commission for months. Later on, with another companion, Max repeated the *Monte Rosa* exploit on her sister ship, the *Donau*.

The war ended before the Nazis could even the score with Max Manus. He was lucky, but he was also very careful. He didn't take any unnecessary chances. His friend Gregers Gram was not so careful. He let himself be ambushed in an Oslo café one night. Five Nazis came at him. Gregers reached for a grenade, but they shot him before he could throw it.

On 8th May 1945, the German forces in Norway capitulated, and soon afterwards, on a fine spring day, Max Manus drove down the main thoroughfare of Oslo, the Karl Johan, in an open car with King Haakon and Crown Princess Märtha, and the whole city was in a turmoil of celebration.

Since that day, Max Manus has tried to forget the years that went before. He found them too frightening. Not being the hero type, he likes it when things are normal. And he'd fight to keep them so.

Condensed from The American Weekly

Königstein, Germany: 1942

Giraud's Brilliant Escape from a Nazi Prison

By Frederick Painton

On 10th May 1940, German infantry flowed out of the woods near Le Catelet, France, and surrounded a French machine-gun nest. After the emplacement had been pulverized by mortar fire, the German officer called on the survivors to surrender. To his amazement, among them appeared a six-foot, grey-moustached man with the five stars of a general on his *képi*. For the second time in twenty-five years Henri Honoré Giraud was a German prisoner of war.

It was a bitter humiliation for a man whose career had just reached its peak. Giraud had been an outstanding officer ever since 1898, when he had a brilliant record at St. Cyr military school. But ill luck followed him into battle. In the First World War, Giraud, then a captain, was wounded while leading a zouave bayonet charge at Charleroi and left for dead on the field. The Germans captured him and placed him in a prison camp in Belgium. Even before his wounds healed he managed to escape. He pretended to be a Belgian, and joined a travelling circus. When the show reached Brussels, Nurse Cavell got him into Holland. From there he made his way to Britain. Although permanently lamed by his wounds, he finally rejoined his regiment in France.

During the peace years he served with distinction in Africa and as governor of Metz. He also taught at the École de la Guerre, where one of his students was a Captain Charles de Gaulle. When the

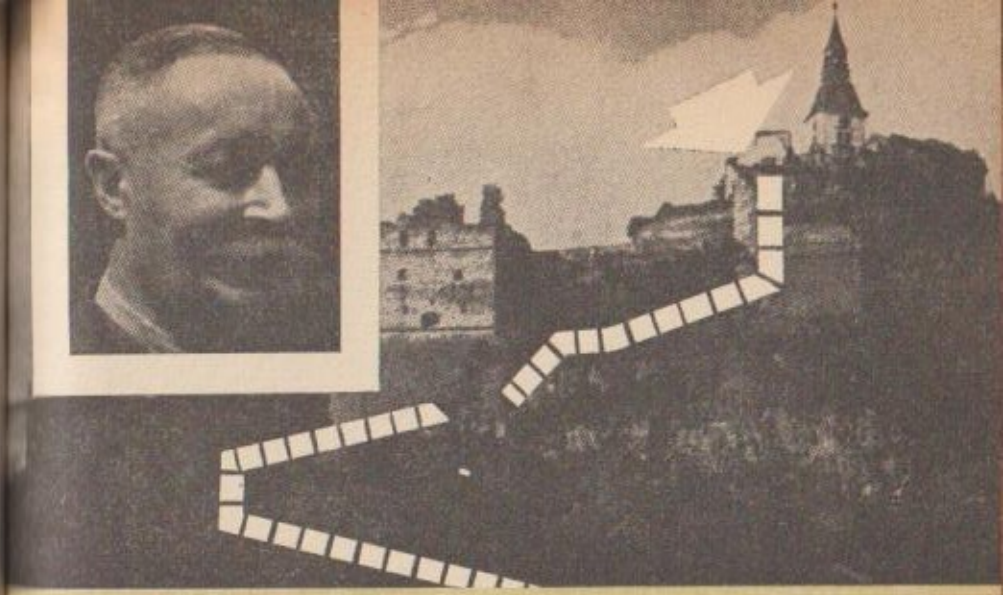
Second World War came, he was made commander-in-chief of the Allied forces before Laon. At the news that the Germans had broken out of the Ardennes forest he rushed to the front to see how the tide might be stemmed. Thus, while on reconnaissance, he had been caught in a forward machine-gun nest.

Giraud had escaped before, yes. But now he was sixty-one. It needed youth to escape. Nevertheless he refused to give his word not to make the attempt. He was taken to the fortress of Königstein, on a sheer cliff 150 feet high, with all entrances double-guarded and a sentry walk where guards passed every ten minutes.

Immediately Giraud began to scheme for escape. He practised his German until he could speak it without an accent. He obtained a map of the surrounding country, and memorized every contour. With the twine from parcels sent to him he patiently wove a rope that would support his fourteen stone. When it proved not strong enough, friends in France sent him 150 feet of copper wire in an adroitly prepared ham. He was allowed, of course, to write letters; his jailers did not know that an invalid prisoner, who had been repatriated, had conveyed a code to the General's wife. Using this, in the form of seemingly innocent letters, he sent out details of his plan bit by bit. This took all the rest of 1940–1.

He had only a French general's undress blue uniform to wear, but his raincoat could pass for a civilian garment. Presently, among the parcels arriving for him was another luscious ham. Had the Germans opened it, they would have found a gay Tyrolean hat.

On the morning of 17th April 1942, Henri Giraud stood on the balcony looking out over the sentry walk. Tied to his waist was a package containing chocolate, biscuits, the Tyrolean hat and the raincoat. When the guard had passed, the General knotted his home-made rope to the balustrade, and started his 150-foot descent. He wore gloves, but even so the skin was chafed from his hands. He had put his wedding ring in his watch pocket; the rope burnt through the cloth, and it was lost in the rocks below. His old wounds gave him agonizing pain, but he reached the ground safely.



At the age of 63, General Giraud escaped from the German fortress of Königstein by clambering down a home-made rope that he had hung over the 150-ft. cliff outside his cell

He limped to the cover of some trees, shaved off his moustache, and put on the Tyrolean hat and the raincoat. Two hours later he reached a bridge at Schandau, five miles away. Calmly he leaned against the parapet and ate the lunch from his pack. There at one o'clock exactly according to plan, a lean young man carrying a suit-case and a hat in the same hand strolled towards Giraud. This was the pre-arranged signal. The young man had been sent by friends.

Giraud and the young man went to the railway station, boarded the first train that came along, and went into a lavatory. There Giraud opened the suit-case and found his own Paris clothes. There were also identity papers bearing the name of an industrialist and a photograph that looked like him—without his moustache—and money. A few minutes later a distinguished-looking businessman left the lavatory.

Now Giraud put into operation part two of his escape plan. The alarm was out, the frontier guards alert. He could hope to avoid

arrest only by travelling continuously on trains until the uproar died away. So now began a week-long *Hegira* by rail through Germany.

Once near Stuttgart, Gestapo agents began working through the train, verifying heights against the passengers' identity cards. Giraud's height could not be disguised. But he happened to be seated opposite a young *Oberleutnant* of the Afrika Korps. He smiled at the lieutenant and remarked that he, too, had spent much time in Africa. The German was delighted to find someone who knew the desert. They conversed animatedly.

By the time the Gestapo man arrived at Giraud's seat he was illustrating graphically with his hands his idea of how Rommel could beat the British. The German lieutenant watched, his own eyes eager, his hands poised.

The Gestapo man touched Giraud's shoulder. "Your papers, please, gentlemen." The lieutenant, boiling to present his own point, looked up angrily. "Go away! How dare you interrupt us?" He went into a tirade. The man did exactly as Giraud had guessed he would: apologized and backed away.

On another occasion, as the general was about to board a train, he saw Gestapo agents searching every passenger. He dallied outside until the train began to move. Then Giraud, with a supreme effort of will, ran—without limping. His glasses jiggled. His cheeks puffed out. He had all the appearance of a flustered German businessman trying to catch a train. He yelled something about how vital it was for him to catch this train, and his very boldness carried the affair off. One of the Gestapo agents actually helped the panting old gentleman aboard.

Finally he crossed the border into occupied France. He hoped to slip over the line into the unoccupied area, but found that German guards were stopping every man over five feet eleven tall. Back he went by train across south-eastern Germany to the Swiss frontier. That, too, seemed tightly closed. But there were mountain trails that could not all be watched. One night he struck out over an unfrequented trail. Climbing among craggy peaks he came upon

three young soldiers. Their bayoneted rifles swung to cover him.

Then a soldier spoke—in a Swiss dialect. He was safe. The guards took him into Basle, where he made his identity known. The Germans were furious, but the Swiss refused to surrender him.

Giraud finally made the dash for unoccupied France. He resorted to an old trick—that of changing cars several times on the lonely Swiss roads. The cars entered unoccupied France by different roads. The Gestapo stopped the wrong car.

In 1914 when he had first escaped from the Germans, Giraud had sent his wife a telegram when he reached Holland safely. It had read: "Business concluded excellent health affectionately Henri." Now he sent her another: "Business concluded excellent health affectionately Henri."

Yet General Henri Giraud was not a free man. When Marshal Pétain refused the German demand to return Giraud, the Nazis tried to assassinate him and he was forced to go into hiding.

History, however, was to summon Henri Giraud from obscurity. On 24th October 1942, in an Arab farm-house in Algeria, Lieutenant-General Mark Clark conferred secretly with pro-Ally French officers about the possible Allied occupation of French North Africa.*

During the conference the French officers raised the point of choosing a leader round whom the many French factions could rally. General Mast said, "There is but one man—General Giraud."

General Clark objected. "But the general is practically a prisoner in unoccupied France."

"He must be got out—by submarine."

Such was the daring plan, put into effect a few nights later when a submarine reached the southern coast of France. The British secret service had informed Giraud, and he was ready. He arrived in North Africa in time to command the French army which fought so magnificently with the Allies in Tunisia.

* See "Secret Mission to North Africa," p. 232

Treasure worth £1,800 million, representing most of Britain's liquid assets, was stored in the subterranean vaults of this Montreal office building

Each gold ingot was worth £5,000 and weighed 27 lb. 6 oz.

How Britain's Wealth Went West

By Leland Stowe

AT 5 p.m. on 2nd July 1940, seventeen days after Paris fell to the Nazi blitz, a special train pulled into Bonaventure station, Montreal, Quebec. Waiting to meet the train were David Mansur, Acting Secretary of the Bank of Canada, and Sidney Perkins, of the Foreign Exchange Control Board. Both men knew that the train carried secret cargo under the code name of "fish," but only Mansur knew that they were about to walk into the biggest financial gamble ever made by any nation in peace or war.

As soon as the train stopped, armed guards stepped down and surrounded it. Mansur and Perkins were led through the guards into one of the coaches. There they met Alexander Craig of the Bank of England; with him were three assistants.

"Hope you won't mind our dropping in unexpectedly like this," smiled Craig. "But we've brought along quite a large shipment of 'fish.'" The slight, spectacled bank official paused, and then nonchalantly added, "Actually, the 'fish' are a very large portion of the liquid assets of Great Britain. We're cleaning out our vaults—in case of invasion, you know. The rest will be coming over shortly."

Sidney Perkins's startled mind began translating "liquid assets" and "rest of the stuff." It could mean only that the Bank of Canada was about to take over virtually everything Britain possessed which could be turned into dollars. Quite a tidy bundle of "fish!" Just how tidy a bundle, he was soon to learn.

Two weeks earlier, when the fall of France threatened Great Britain with imminent invasion, Winston Churchill had called the Cabinet into secret session and had decided to transport over £1,800 millions-worth of securities and gold to Canada.

The shipments would first have to get through the submarine-infested North Atlantic, but once safely in Canada they would be used to pay for the war goods Britain desperately needed. (This was before Lend-Lease, and Britain could buy from the United States only on a cash-and-carry basis.) Upon the outcome of the secret "Battle for Bullion" that now began lay the ability of Britain to stand alone.

The decision held even greater import. It meant that Churchill's government was secretly determined to do far more than "fight on the beaches." If a German invasion should succeed, the British would carry on the war from Canada. The transfer of the treasure was thus part of a two-stage, last-ditch survival plan.

The prime need was for *secrecy*. Any leak to the Nazis would not only endanger the shipments but would also greatly affect the country's morale. The nation's fighting spirit was still superb. Any indication that the government recognized the possibility of a successful invasion might well undermine the will to resist. So the Battle for Bullion was fought under cover, completely screened from public knowledge, without a single official communiqué.

A farsighted move at the outset of the war made the whole gamble possible: all British citizens in the United Kingdom had been required to register with the Treasury all the foreign securities they owned. This was part of the treasure which Churchill and his Cabinet now decided to commandeer. Never before had the investments of a nation's private citizens been pre-empted for national defence without securing consent from the owners. But in June 1940, when Paris was threatened, the government moved.

"In ten days," says a participant, "all selected securities in the banks in the United Kingdom were scooped up, packed in thousands of boxes, and delivered to regional collecting centres."

Here were all the vast profits brought to Britain by generations of world-traders and investors. Together with tons of Britain's accumulated gold, they would now be sent across the sea. In that month of June, fifty-seven Allied and neutral ships totalling 349,177 tons had been sunk in the North Atlantic alone.

The cruiser HMS *Emerald*, commanded by Captain Francis Cyril Flynn, was selected to carry the first secret shipment. She would sail from Greenock on 24th June. On Sunday, 23rd June, four of the Bank of England's "gilt-edged" specialists, with Alexander Craig as chief, entrained for Glasgow with only a suitcase apiece. Meanwhile, heavily guarded secret trains rushed final deliveries of gold and securities to the cruiser at Greenock. Late that night the destroyer *Cossack*—at thirty knots and heavy risk—sped through thick fog to join the treasure ship's escort.

By six p.m. on the 24th the *Emerald* was crammed with a load of treasure such as no one ship had ever carried before. Her magazines were heaped high with 2,229 heavy bullion boxes, each containing four bars of gold. (The tons of gold were so heavy that they bent the angle irons beneath the magazines' floors.)

Elsewhere were stored 488 boxes of securities the value of which, conservatively estimated, was more than £100 million. More than £130 million in one shipment was about to be committed to the hazards of war in the North Atlantic.

"We left the Clyde that night with reports of bad weather ahead," recalled Captain Flynn, a sturdy, ruddy-faced man with unflinching grey-blue eyes. "The reports were correct. The seas whipped up as we rounded the north coast of Ireland next morning. When we turned out into the Atlantic we were punching into a heavy sea and a rising gale."

The ship's paymaster, encountering Alexander Craig on deck, remarked: "The Old Man's just had a signal from the Admiralty. There's a couple of German subs waiting for us." Then the paymaster sauntered nonchalantly away, leaving the Bank of England's

mathematical expert to compute the odds against their safe arrival.

The odds grew longer as the weather grew worse. The gale cut down the speed of the escorting destroyers. Finally Captain Vian, in command of the escort, signalled to Captain Flynn that he would hold a straight course while the *Emerald* zigzagged behind the destroyers. That way the *Emerald* could maintain a higher, and safer, speed.

But the ocean got rougher and rougher. It cut the destroyers' pace so severely that Captain Flynn decided to travel alone. "We found it wiser," he says, "for the escorts to turn back. I put *Emerald's* speed up to twenty-two knots. Those first three days the going was such that many of our crew became seasick." But on the fourth day the weather cleared, and shortly after 5 a.m. on 1st July the Nova Scotia coast showed dimly ahead. Now, in a calm sea, the *Emerald* churned straight for Halifax at twenty-eight knots. By 7.35 a.m. the treasure ship was safely docked.

Waiting at the quayside was a special train with a dozen luggage coaches. On hand were officials of the Bank of Canada and the Canadian National Express. The quays were screened off under extreme precautionary measures; every box was checked off the *Emerald* and rechecked into the coaches.

At 7 p.m. the gold train rolled away. At Montreal the security-bearing coaches were cut off; the gold cargo sped on to Ottawa.

This was the train which David Mansur and Sidney Perkins met in Montreal. Now the treasure was tossed into their laps. Where could the hundreds of crates of securities be safely hidden? David Mansur had found the answer.

The Sun Life Assurance Company's twenty-four-story granite building, occupying an entire block in Montreal, was the largest commercial building in the Commonwealth. It had three subterranean levels: the lowest of these was to be the wartime home of what was now christened "The United Kingdom Security Deposit."

The big move started that night as soon as Montreal's streets grew quiet and free of traffic. Shortly after 1 a.m. city police isolated

the few streets between the railway yards and the Sun Life building and the bullion vans began to move. Accompanied by armed, plain-clothes Canadian National Express guards, they shuttled steadily through the streets and down Sun Life's rear entry ramp. Once inside, Royal Canadian Mounted Police hovered hawk-like as the boxes were lowered to the "Buttress-Room" in the third basement. With the last shunted into place—and checked—Deposit Manager Craig, for the Bank of England, handed David Mansur a receipt to sign for the Bank of Canada.

But a few days later the Deposit's assets barely escaped an unscheduled liquidation. A terrific thunderstorm deluged Montreal, causing a very heavy seepage through the Buttress-Room's side walls. Fortunately the security crates had been piled on heavy planks, laid on struts two feet off the floor. When discovered at about 4 p.m. the inrushing water was lapping the planks: emergency pumps were started just in time to save millions in securities from being reduced to indecipherable paper pulp.

Construction of a burglarproof vault was now begun. But a vault sixty feet square and eleven feet high required a lot of steel. Where could it be got in wartime? Fortunately, someone thought of an unused, forgotten railway. Two miles of its tracks provided 870 rails which went into the vault's three-foot-thick cement walls and ceiling. Also into the ceiling went dozens of microphonic sound-detection devices, so supersensitive that they would record even the sliding click of a filing-cabinet drawer.

To open the vault door, two different combinations were required. Two bank officials were given one combination; two more were given the other. "I never knew what the other combination was from first to last," says one. "To open the vault we had to pair up every day."

Three dozen similar trainloads of securities arrived in the next three months. To store the certificates, nearly 900 four-drawer filing cabinets were needed. Twenty-four Canadian Mounties guarded the treasure day and night, eating and sleeping in the building.

THE *Emerald's* epic voyage was merely the first dash in the historic transatlantic race. On 8th July, five ships left British ports with the greatest combined load of treasure ever transported by land or sea. Out of the Clyde at midnight slipped the battleship *Revenge* and the cruiser *Bonaventure* to make a rendezvous in the North Channel off Scotland with three former liners: the *Monarch of Bermuda*, the *Sobieski* and the *Batory** (the latter two being Free Polish ships). Four destroyers served as escorts.

Under the command of Admiral Sir Ernest Archer, this convoy carried approximately £192 millions-worth of gold bullion, plus 299 boxes of securities which Sir Ernest had reason to evaluate at "about £250 million"—or a total value of about £442 million.

"We had the usual Admiralty reports of submarines active in the vicinity," Admiral Archer recalls. (In the two previous weeks twenty-eight Allied ships totalling 139,000 tons had been destroyed by the enemy.) "We managed to dodge their U-boats. Whenever we knew they were near we'd do a few jinks. Enemy raiders were also active, but none put in an appearance. Were we nervous? We knew what was on board. You took the ships and did your best."

After some 200 miles the escorts left the treasure ships on their own. But with Admiral Archer "doing what he could" incomparably well, the convoy pushed and dodged steadily westward. It didn't seem quite so simple to his important passengers: Sir Otto Niemeyer, then a Director of the Bank of England, and his fiscal experts. One reports: "It was absolutely marvellous how those ships kept station. They went at high speed, yet each kept its fixed position several hundred yards from the others as they twisted and turned in evasive action. With no lights at night they moved closer together, but there was never even a near-collision."

As to Admiral Archer—"An incredible man," said his executive officer, Commander H. L. Jenkins. "Nothing worried him. Even

*After the war, the *Batory* was handed over to Communist Poland and began a chequered peacetime career. More than fifty people have jumped ship and sought political asylum when it has docked in Britain and Denmark. In 1953 the captain, Jan Cwiklinski, fled when the *Batory* was berthed in South Shields.

when lifeboats were torn off by the waves, he just plugged on."

Three-quarters of the way across, an engine defect slowed down the *Batory*. To avoid risking the rest of his ships the Admiral diverted her to St. John, with the *Bonaventure* to see her in. As the others dashed for Halifax these two ships ran into grave trouble.

"We hit a most frightful fog, with floating ice at the same time," said Vice-Admiral (then Captain) Jack Egerton, who was in command of *Bonaventure*. "For nearly twelve hours it stopped us dead. I had to stick close to the *Batory* in the fog. Between us we carried some £60 million in bullion—and you couldn't see an iceberg until it was practically on top of you." Somehow Captain Egerton kept contact with the *Batory* and chaperoned her into St. John—then steamed full speed for Halifax.

All across the Atlantic the *Revenge's* eight fifteen-inch and twelve six-inch guns, plus her four-inch anti-aircraft batteries, were ready for action. "The gun crews were always at their stations," says Commander Jenkins. "At night they slept beside their guns. Damage-control parties kept a constant watch for leaks or fire."

On 13th July the three ships slipped safely into Halifax harbour, shortly followed by the *Bonaventure*, then the *Batory*. In Admiral Archer's words, "The arrival was a relief."

WITH THE precious cargo safe from enemy submarines, there was a slight tendency to relax the tension. As unloading of the *Revenge* got under way, a gold ingot from a broken box plunged through the hatchway to the fourth deck below. A sailor, peering down, called: "Is that gold all right?" An angry sailor shouted up: "What about our bloody heads?"

Another mishap sprinkled quarts of gold sovereigns down the hatch. Jenkins dispatched midshipmen to retrieve them. When re-weighed the coins scaled exactly right.

Sidney Perkins was on hand for their arrival, as he was for most of the others. When Perkins saw the manifests' figures for the five ships he could scarcely believe his eyes. "Seeing tens of

millions in gold piled on the quay gave me a cold chill," he admits. "Even with the whole area fenced off, some word about this enormous shipment could easily leak out in a big port like Halifax.

"I was happy to see the last box off the *Revenge*. But checking the manifests I found we were three cases short. Jenkins made sailors comb the ship from stem to stern for half an hour—without results. Completely baffled, we paused in the ward-room's bar. 'Haven't you got a list showing where each box was stored?' I asked.

" 'We were in a bit of a rush, loading in the Clyde,' Jenkins drawled. 'At any moment a Junkers 88 could have dropped a *bon voyage* present down our stacks.'

"The mess steward, preparing our drinks, suddenly got the point of the conversation. 'Perhaps I've got what you're looking for, sir,' he suggested. 'There's something down here I've been tripping over since we left the Clyde.' The three boxes of Britain's 'liquid assets' had been stored, appropriately, beneath several cases of Scotch whisky."

Five special trains were needed to carry the convoy's bullion from Halifax to Ottawa. The gold was so heavy that only 150 to 200 boxes could be laid on the floor of each coach. Each train had ten to fourteen loaded luggage coaches; a diner and two sleeping cars were added for about fifty railway and Canadian National Express guards. Two guards, on four-hour shifts, were locked with the bullion inside each coach.

All these gold shipments travelled without insurance. Who could or would insure hundreds of millions of pounds in bullion, especially in wartime? But the *Revenge* convoy set a cost record of another kind. Transport charges of the Canadian National Express were the largest in its history—"over one million dollars."

In Ottawa the CNR juggled the arrivals of the specials so that the gold could be transported from the station at night to the Bank of Canada in Wellington Street. Who could imagine that this five-story structure, with scarcely a 140-foot frontage, was soon to be Fort Knox's only important rival anywhere in the world?

For three days the *Revenge* convoy's golden flood poured into the Bank's 60-by-100-foot vault. Unpacking was pushed feverishly. At last tens of thousands of twenty-seven pound ingots were neatly piled like huge cakes of yellow soap inside the wired cages: row after row, tier above tier, all solid gold, up to the ceiling.

Besides the bullion, the vault at one time held over 50,000 sacks of gold coins from many countries. There were millions of world-famous French "Napoleons," countless other coins stamped with the profiles of Louis XVI, Louis XV and Louis XIV. British gold sovereigns ranged from George V and Queen Victoria through George III's rare "spade guineas" to souvenirs of Elizabethan times. There were quantities of modern and old Dutch coins, great numbers of Maria Theresa gold thalers, thousands of Scandinavian and other European gold pieces.

MEANWHILE, in Montreal, just outside the crammed securities vault, a huge, high-ceilinged room had been equipped as the Deposit's office. Now, deep in that sub-cellar the strangest, most secret stock-and-share business in the world mushroomed. Mansur had recruited some 120 Canadians—retired bankers, brokers and investment-firm secretaries—as a staff. Taking oaths of secrecy, they began to unravel what some called "our bundles from Britain."

It was an incredibly exclusive office. Only one lift operated down to the third basement. Every employee had to present a pass (changed each month), first at the lift entrance and then to Mountie guards below, signing in and out daily. Beneath the guards' table concealed trip-hammer alarms connected directly with RCMP and Montreal police headquarters, and with the Dominion Electric Protection's service. Once a Mountie accidentally tripped his alarm. Within three minutes the place swarmed with trigger-ready police.

All summer, as other arrivals pushed the total of boxes of securities up to nearly 2,000, Craig's staff worked ten-hour days, six days a week. The securities were a gigantic hotchpotch of thousands of separately owned issues; all had to be unpacked,

checked and classified. In the end some 2,000 different stocks and shares were identified. Each individually owned parcel was tied (more than seventy miles of tape was required) and its contents double-checked. To correct discrepancies in cross-checked lists, more than 6,000 "query slips" were dispatched to London. All business was urgent, because none of these "negotiables" could be marketed until the lists, amounts and ownership were verified. "It looked, then," a member of the staff told me, "as if everything that would fetch a dollar must be marketed." By early autumn that process began.

"Craig had a whole squad of secretaries doing nothing but cutting coupons," says one Canadian. "I never saw so many coupons in my life. A great many owners hadn't touched their shares for a long time."

In his war memoirs Sir Winston Churchill says laconically that: "Up to November 1940, we had already sold 335 million dollars-worth of American shares, requisitioned for sterling from private owners in Britain."

After the Treasury's representative sold the securities the former owners were repaid at whatever the current market prices had been—but they were obliged to accept payment in sterling rather than dollars. In that way Britain obtained masses of additional dollars for war purchases.

By September, Deposit Manager Craig, who knew all along what he was *supposed* to have, knew at last that he *had* it: every certificate was accounted for and filed. "I don't believe we lost a single coupon," he said recently. "Not a certificate was missing. In view of the pressure under which they were assembled and shipped, it was quite extraordinary."

Equally extraordinary was the way the entire clandestine operation was successfully blacked-out. One day when war news was bad a Sun Life waitress, recently emigrated from Britain, remarked glumly to Perkins: "If the Germans take Southampton I hope they won't grab my two shares in Canadian Pacific." Perkins

suppressed a knowing grin. At that moment she was standing almost directly over the spot where her shares were safely stored.

The Deposit remained in Canada for the duration of the war, but its liquidating (market) operations in US securities ended with the enactment of Lend-Lease in March 1941. By then a substantial proportion of the negotiables had been sold. Thereafter the Deposit served merely as a place for safekeeping.

How much had all the securities been worth? Three highly-placed authorities, closely concerned, agree in independently estimating the Deposit's over-all value at approximately £1,250 million.

THE GOLD, as well as securities, kept on arriving. In the three months of June, July and August the Admiralty's records show that British ships (with a few Canadian and Polish) carried to Canada and the United States gold worth more than £637 million.

Most amazing fact of all: in those three months 134 Allied and neutral ships were sunk in the North Atlantic—but not one gold-carrying vessel went down.

According to an ancient practice, whenever a British warship successfully transported bullion its officers and crew were awarded a "bounty"—one tenth of one per cent of their gold cargo's value. Unluckily for the winners of Britain's battle for bullion, this long-established regulation was rescinded some time before the Second World War.

WINSTON CHURCHILL and his war Cabinet won their gigantic gamble. Not only did Britain's means to fight arrive safely in Canada—a treasure worth more than £1,800 million—but the whole vast operation was successfully kept tightly veiled in secrecy. At one time or another well over 600 people were involved in the Security Deposit's clandestine services. The gold deliveries involved thousands of ships' personnel and hundreds of dock-workers on both sides of the ocean. Perhaps never before have so many kept so great a secret so incredibly well.

Shepherds of the Underground

By George Kent

FROM A goods train on a siding in eastern France, a woman worker of the French Red Cross heard a strange, muffled wailing, like the sound of a radio heard through a wall. She walked along the train, listening, and discovered to her horror that inside one of the wagons children were screaming. She called the station master and they managed to get the door open.

There were eighty Jewish children packed tight in that goods wagon, clinging to each other in terror. They had been put aboard by the Germans in Paris with two loaves of bread, a flagon of water and some cheese. They had been locked in for eighteen hours while the train made its halting progress towards the Reich. Four had already died. The presence of these dead companions, the darkness, the fear of the unknown future had made the children hysterical. Several of them were temporarily deranged.

The Germans had cut off their identification bracelets and most of them were too young to know their names. One little girl remembered brightly that she lived at number sixteen but could not remember the street.

Yet these children were lucky; they were smuggled into hiding. Most of the 15,000 Jewish children the Germans seized in France and packed off to Germany were not so fortunate. There is evidence that many were put to death in the gas chambers of Poland.

My story concerns the children the Nazis didn't get. There were

12,000 or more, from babies to gawky kids of sixteen. Of these 4,000 were smuggled across the Swiss and Spanish borders: 8,000 were kept alive and safe right under the Nazis' nose.

The leaders in the work were two Catholic priests and a Protestant minister—Fathers Chaillet and Duvaux, and the Rev. Paul Vergara. Father Chaillet was a nervous man with the pallor and tired eyes of a scholar who worked fourteen to sixteen hours daily. Father Duvaux was a figure out of the *Canterbury Tales*, an enormous rosy tub of a man with a full beard. Pastor Vergara, whose denomination resembled the Presbyterian, was small and gnome-like, with dishevelled grey hair and high cheek bones.

These three men perfected an interlocking organization throughout France, the sole purpose of which was to save Jewish children from the Nazis. Father Chaillet alone managed to find safety for more than 4,000. Duvaux tucked away 1,000. Vergara with the help of other Protestant ministers accounted for another 1,000. The rest were taken care of by ordinary people, inspired by love of children and hatred of the Germans.

A well-known doctor helped by taking Jewish children to his hospital and fitting them out with fake disease and fever charts. He also developed a chemical formula which washed the word Jew from the children's food cards—the red ink of the stamp had resisted all previous eradicators.

One committee of ten middle-aged women, five Protestant and five Catholic, managed to save 358 children at the risk of their own lives. One woman was captured and put to the torture of boiling hot baths alternated with icy cold ones. Scores of men and women were imprisoned; some were killed.

Father Chaillet, a Jesuit, was the outstanding figure in this labour of love. After the 1940 armistice, he started a militantly liberal weekly called *Témoignage Chrétien* (*The Christian Witness*), which attained considerable underground influence, especially among young men and women, who haunted his office.

Early in 1942, the Vichy government rounded up and shipped to

Germany several thousand Jews. In Lyons, where the priest lived, the deported men and women were forced to leave their children behind—120 in all. Father Chaillet started gathering up the youngsters. Four he found, half-starved and terror-stricken, living in a cellar. A dozen more were picked up in the street. Thirty he took from a barracks where the police had put them.

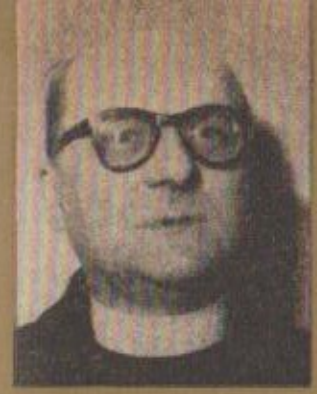
Methodically he set out to put the children beyond the reach of the Germans in such a way that they might be united with their families after the war. A former detective fingerprinted each child. Records of names, addresses and identification marks were drawn up in triplicate and secreted.

Then Father Chaillet sent his young helpers, usually girls of eighteen to twenty, into the country on their bicycles to talk to peasants. They discovered if the peasants were patriots, if they could be trusted with the care of orphans—and if they had a cow or a milk goat. In a radius of 100 miles round Lyons the girls secured havens for most of the children. Arrangements for the others were made with Catholic orphanages and schools. False papers had to be prepared for each child.

Older, matronly-looking women ran the greater risk of taking the children to the new homes. It was difficult rehearsing the little ones. One small girl, given a new name, wept, "How will Mama know me when she comes back?" A six-year-old boy of Dutch parents, who spoke French with a thick accent, was warned to keep utterly silent on the journey. The ride lasted four hours and the child did not open his mouth. But on arrival, his trousers were wet. "You told me not to speak," he explained pathetically.

Incorporated into the peasant families, the children mingled freely with the other youngsters of the locality, at school and at play. In these small communities the status of the new arrivals was no secret. But only half a dozen in all were betrayed.

A few months after Father Chaillet had hidden the children, the Germans set a quota of 200 Jews to be surrendered by Lyons and the Vichy police proposed to send the children as part of it. Father



Father Pierre Chaillet: when Nazi tyranny threatened the children of Europe, his underground organization went to their aid

Chaillet defied the authorities to find them and was sent to a concentration camp.

In prison he wrote an open letter to Catholics and Protestants which was smuggled out and sent to 10,000 priests and ministers. It appealed to all churches to join the fight against Hitler by helping the Jews. Much of the valiant part taken in the Resistance by the French clergy can be traced to the influence of this letter.

Released at the end of three months, Father Chaillet doffed his clerical dress and took his organization underground. *Témoignage Chrétien* as an organ of the Resistance achieved a circulation of more than 200,000. Father Chaillet was recognized as the spiritual leader of the Resistance and General de Gaulle appointed him chief of all the social services of the Underground.

His centre of operation was a humble room in a slum street in Grenoble. Here he planned many successful *coups* of the Resistance and worked out the complicated mechanism of hiding Jewish children. Once, trapped by the Gestapo, he hastily chewed and swallowed papers that might have incriminated him. Then he managed to talk his way out. As time went on he extended his activities until he was operating in every corner of France. His staff of several hundred workers ranged from small boys who served as messengers to five countesses who acted as escorts.

In July 1942 the Germans rounded up 13,000 adult Jews in Paris and herded them into the Vélodrome d'Hiver, the big sports arena. The screaming of the women, torn from their children, could be heard in near-by streets. Thousands witnessed the incident; it horrified the French and shocked them into activity. Neighbours picked up the children and tried to comfort them.

Father Duvaux, a Dominican, sent out nuns who brought back thirty of the children. At night he distributed them, in groups of three, among the homes of friends in Paris. There they stayed until places could be found for them outside the city. Then the nuns went back for more. Thus began the work of Father Duvaux.

For him, it was particularly dangerous. He had been famous in

Europe before the war as an opponent of anti-Semitism. The Nazis ransacked his house and carried off his books and papers. Gestapo men kept watch on his quarters for twenty-four hours a day.

Not all the children left behind after the July raid fell into friendly hands. The Gestapo found many of them and put them in camps, where they stayed in a sort of cold storage to await the next draft.

One day a Red Cross worker who visited such a place described the squalor to Pastor Paul Vergara. The little man went into a black rage. At the settlement house he had been running in a Paris slum, he brought together a dozen women, including his wife. They prepared an order in German, purporting to come from Gestapo headquarters, requiring the release of the children. It was a dangerous trick, but it succeeded.

Over the door of the settlement house, Pastor Vergara had painted the words of Louis Pasteur: "We do not ask of an unfortunate: What country do you come from or what is your religion? We say to him: You suffer, that is enough. You belong to us; we shall make you well." That night seventy ragged, frightened Jewish children shuffled across the threshold beneath the noble inscription. On the following day the pastor embarked on the enterprise of finding permanent homes for the children, co-operating with Fathers Chaillet and Duvaux.

Twice, later on, the Gestapo raided the settlement house. They killed Vergara's brother-in-law the first time. Warned of the second raid, the office staff escaped through a window and across adjoining roofs. But the Germans imprisoned and tortured Vergara's wife and son, and later deported the boy.

At one time there were reckoned to be 8,000 children hidden in France. When the war ended very few of their parents returned to claim them. And perhaps the only relief in the misery of the situation was the happiness of foster parents whose adopted youngsters then became their own.

Condensed from Christian Herald

The Frogman Who Crippled a Fleet

By J. D. Ratcliff

MY DEAR MOTHER: *By the time you receive this letter I will be dead. I volunteered for a dangerous mission which failed . . . .*

This was the first of three letters written by Lieutenant Luigi Durand de la Penne of the Italian Navy two weeks before Christmas, 1941. A second announced success, a third that he was a prisoner of war. When the mission ended, the appropriate letter would be posted.

De la Penne, twenty-seven, a handsome, athletic six-footer, was about to embark on an undertaking that ranks high in the annals of courage: he was to be the leader of a six-man party in a barehanded attack on British naval power at Alexandria. Pitting twelve-stone men against 32,000-ton battleships, he was destined to win a signal naval victory and the admiration of its principal victim. Said Winston Churchill: "An extraordinary example of courage and ingenuity."

De la Penne's assignment was to sink main elements of British sea power in the Mediterranean at a critical moment in history. The British had just lost a battleship and an aircraft-carrier to submarines. The remaining two Mediterranean battleships had taken sanctuary in Alexandria harbour. De la Penne and his fellow volunteers were to ride midget submarines—called "pigs"—right into the harbour and attack the ships there.

Each "pig" was twenty-two feet long and twenty-one inches in

diameter. Propelled by silent electric motors, they had a speed of two to three m.p.h., a range of ten miles, a detachable warhead carrying 660 pounds of explosive. Once in the harbour, the teams were to attach explosive charges to hulls, then escape if possible.

The odds that any of them would return were slim. De la Penne and his men were advised to make wills and pack belongings for shipment home in case they didn't return. No officer of the group was supposed to be married. "But," de la Penne says, "I disliked the idea of dying without leaving a son behind." So he proposed to Valeria Butti, pretty daughter of a prominent Genoa family. After a secret ceremony de la Penne reported back for duty.

On 18th December the three teams were aboard the submarine *Scirè*, lying on the sea floor outside Alexandria harbour. Latest intelligence reports confirmed that the battleships HMS *Valiant* and HMS *Queen Elizabeth* were in the harbour. De la Penne and his crewman, Petty Officer Emilo Bianchi, were to take the *Valiant*, Lieutenant Antonio Marceglia and Spartaco Schergat, the *Queen Elizabeth*. Lieutenant Vincenzo Martellotta and Mario Marino were to attack a 16,000-ton fleet tanker, and then scatter floating incendiary bombs in the hope that oil from the tanker would set the entire harbour on fire. After completing their work, the teams were to swim ashore, steal a fishing boat and rendezvous on 24th December with an Italian submarine.

Shortly before 9 p.m. the crews struggled into their tight rubber suits. Their little craft moved slowly towards the harbour lighthouse. As they sat astride the pigs, only their heads protruded above water.

Time fuses were to be set. The tanker would go up at about 5.55 a.m., the *Valiant* at 6.05, the *Elizabeth* at 6.15. There was still time for the men to eat—possibly their last meal. From sealed canisters they extracted cold chicken, bread and small bottles of champagne.

Now the moment had come to move in closer to the steel net which guarded the harbour entrance. The pigs had pneumatic cutting shears, but they were noisy and nets were frequently festooned with explosive charges. While de la Penne hesitated,

pondering his next move, the lighthouse and the harbour suddenly lit up—ships were about to enter!

As the net parted, de la Penne said: "Let's go!" Three destroyers appeared out of the darkness. The three pigs followed, tossing wildly in the destroyers' wake.

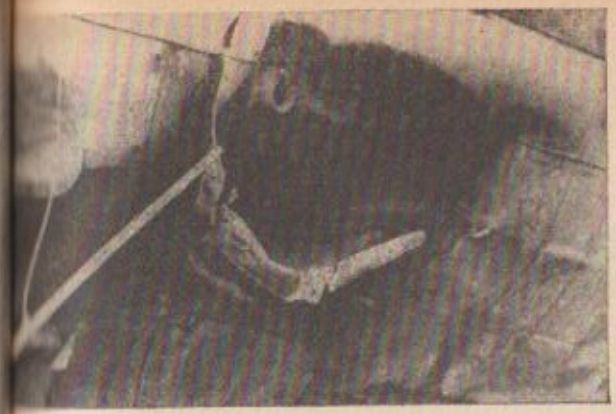
Once inside, the frogmen set about spotting their targets. De la Penne approached the *Valiant*—and ran into a protective net. He and Bianchi tried to lift it. It was too heavy. There was only one solution: to try to roll themselves and their pig over the top without being discovered. To their relief, the manoeuvre was successful. They promptly submerged.

The best place for the charge was under No. 1 turret. To get a final check on position, de la Penne surfaced, unreeling a coil of cord which would guide him back to the pig. When he returned to the depths the pig refused to start. Suspecting that the cord had fouled the propeller, he turned to Bianchi to signal him to clear it. Bianchi was gone! De la Penne went to work alone.

The explosive warhead was still 100 feet out of position. Working with bare hands numb with cold, de la Penne started inching his 660-pound burden through the mud. After nearly an hour of back-breaking work the charge was in position, but de la Penne was too exhausted to attach it to the hull. However, since it was on the bottom only five feet under the ship, he felt sure it would work. The time was now 3 a.m.—three hours to go before the explosion.

Almost at the point of collapse, he surfaced—with a faint splash. It was enough to alert the deck watch on the *Valiant*. Instantly a searchlight pin-pointed him. There was a hail of bullets. Spotting an anchor buoy, de la Penne swam for its protection. Behind it was Bianchi. His breathing apparatus had failed, he had lost consciousness, bobbed to the surface, revived and swum to the buoy.

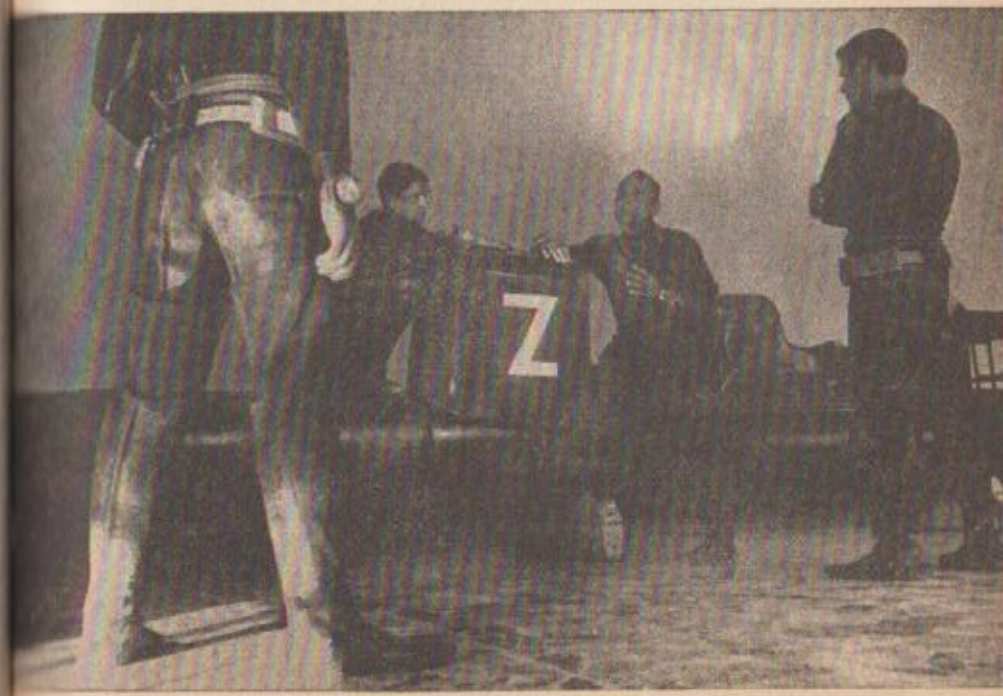
Soon a boat picked the two men up. At 3.30 a.m. they were questioned on the quarter-deck by the *Valiant's* executive officer. Beyond giving rank and serial number, both prisoners refused to divulge any information. They were separated, and de la Penne was



The *Valiant's* damaged hull after the Italian raiders struck

Luigi Durand de la Penne led the team of two-man submarines

The men wore frogmen's suits; each midget submarine had 660 lb. of explosive in its detachable warhead



imprisoned in a store-room on a lower deck of the *Valiant*—almost directly over the warhead. Braced by a glass of rum and a packet of cigarettes, he watched the minutes tick away—5.30, 5.40 . . . .

There was a rumble in the distance. Martellotta's team had blown up the fleet tanker. Her entire stern was torn away, and a destroyer lying alongside was damaged, but the incendiaries failed to work. It was now 5.54—eleven minutes to go. De la Penne pounded on his cell door, asked to be taken to the ship's commander, Captain Charles Morgan. "Your ship will blow up in ten minutes," he said. "I have no desire to kill men unnecessarily. I suggest you get all hands on deck."

"Where is the charge placed?" Morgan asked. "If you refuse to answer, I must send you back below." De la Penne refused, for if Morgan knew that the charge was lying on the bottom, he could move the *Valiant* out of danger. As he was taken back to his cell, the ship's loudspeaker system ordered all hands on deck.

De la Penne kept his eyes glued to his watch. His life, quite likely, was ticking away. Had he set the fuse properly? Of course, it was impossible to set it to the exact second. At 6.06, the charge exploded. The *Valiant* shook convulsively and filled with smoke. De la Penne was hurled across his cell and knocked momentarily unconscious. When he revived, he saw that his cell door had been blown open. He made his way on deck unnoticed, fixed his eyes on the *Queen Elizabeth* near by. At 6.15 there was a terrific explosion. Marceglia had placed the charge directly under the *Queen Elizabeth's* engine room, and oil gushed from her stacks, showering the harbour and the *Valiant*. Since the anchorage was shallow, all three ships settled on the bottom remaining nearly upright.

At this moment the Italian Navy was supreme in the Mediterranean, and with the protection its cruisers could give, there should have been no insurmountable problems about supplying German and Italian troops in North Africa. But those cruisers never ventured out, and for an astonishing reason. Air reconnaissance pictures taken next day were correctly interpreted by Italian intelligence

officers: *Valiant* was listing to port; *Queen Elizabeth* was down by the bows; both, clearly, were seriously damaged. But Mussolini overruled his experts. The ships, he decreed, were unharmed. Since his word could not be challenged, the Italian fleet remained in port, and missed its golden opportunity.

The British did everything possible to support Mussolini's folly. While frantic work was done on the jagged forty-foot holes in the two warships, calm reigned on the surface. Both ships kept up steam. Band concerts and receptions were held on deck. But it was more than a year before either was again ready for action.

Meanwhile, the six Italian frogmen had all been taken prisoner. De la Penne was sent to Cairo, thence to Palestine, where he escaped to Syria. He was caught and placed aboard an India-bound ship. In India, he escaped once more and was again picked up.

An occasional letter got through from his wife. One gossiped happily about the clever things "Renzo" had done. Renzo was the name of de la Penne's younger brother, and he wondered about his wife's sanity. He didn't know he had a year-old son of that name.

De la Penne was released shortly after Italy made peace with the Allies in 1943. He joined the Allied side, helped to thwart plans of retreating Germans to block the harbour at La Spezia. He and others slipped in and sank the ships there before they could be manoeuvred into the harbour entrance for scuttling.

One day in 1945 there was an extraordinary ceremony. Crown Prince Umberto of Italy was about to pin his nation's highest decoration, the Medaglia d'Oro, on de la Penne's chest. From those in attendance a man stepped forward—Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Morgan, British commander of naval forces in the area, former skipper of the *Valiant*. Thanks to de la Penne's warning, not a life had been lost among the *Valiant*'s 1,700-man crew. Morgan turned to the Crown Prince. "May I have the privilege of pinning the decoration on this gallant gentleman?" he asked.

Condensed from Life

The Man Who Did Business with Himmler

By Edwin Muller

EARLY in the war the name of Eric Erickson of Stockholm was put on the Allied black list. He was accused of trading with the enemy and aiding the German war effort. Allied Intelligence had reported that Erickson was dealing in German oil, making regular trips to Germany, and that he was on intimate terms with high-ranking Gestapo officials.

The disclosure was a stunning shock to Erickson's family. His old friends, all of whom were strongly pro-Ally, now crossed the street to avoid him. His wife was ostracized. But nothing stopped him.

"Red" Erickson was the aggressive salesman type, the sort whose career lies in making "contacts," in selling his genial self as well as his line of goods. He had gone into the oil business because it was exciting and took him to places. He spent years in the Orient and later in Europe, working for big international oil companies.

The "oil crowd" in the '20's and '30's was an international clan. You'd see a man in Shanghai one year, in London or Teheran the next. One year you might be competing ruthlessly with him, the next you'd both be on the same side of the fence. British, American, Dutch, German, they lived in an atmosphere of adventurous gambles and deals. Erickson was manager for the Texas Oil Company in Sweden. Then he started his own company to sell American oil products.

Soon after the war began, he saw an opportunity to do business with the Nazis. Germany then had oil to export, and it was absurd

to suppose that the Allies could ever affect the supply materially by bombing. So Erickson began to cultivate German businessmen. He joined the German Chamber of Commerce in Stockholm. He drew away from most of his old friends but kept on good terms with Prince Carl Bernadotte, nephew of the King of Sweden. The Prince, too, was playing with the Nazis—to most Swedes' disgust.

Erickson knew that Heinrich Himmler, chief of the Gestapo, would make the final decision on the oil deals. So the prospect on whom Erickson did his heavy work was Herr Finke, Himmler's chief representative in Sweden and a fanatical Nazi. Finke's weak point was a snobbish susceptibility to royalty. Prince Carl helped to make the contact and Erickson did the cultivating. Soon he was entertaining Herr Finke at his place in the country.

Other prospects, however, weren't so easy—notably Herr Ludwig, Commercial Attaché of the German Legation. He didn't like Erickson at all. But despite Ludwig's aloofness, Erickson got permission to visit Germany in the spring of 1941, with letters of introduction from Finke and others.

At Bromma Airport, outside Stockholm, the plane to Berlin was held up while Erickson was ordered off by the Swedish police. They thoroughly searched him and his luggage, but nothing incriminating was found, and he was allowed to proceed.

In Berlin, next morning, an official car took him to Gestapo headquarters. There he met two men who had been on the plane with him—Gestapo agents. They agreed that the incident at Bromma had been the work of Allied representatives.

Erickson made his contacts with German oil men, especially in Hamburg. He visited refineries there, talked with the managers, discussed the terms of the contracts he wanted. He also looked round for some of the oil crowd he used to know. First he found Captain von Wunsch, a Junker who had received part of his education in Britain, and had at one time been associated with Shell Oil. Since Erickson hoped to keep his deals secret, his talks with von Wunsch were very hush-hush. One day Erickson gave von Wunsch

a certain mysterious document which von Wunsch put in a tin box and buried in his back garden. Another contact was Herr von Stürker, an oil banker, of an old Hamburg family. Von Stürker also got a paper. Erickson made sure neither of them saw him with the other.

Soon after Erickson went back to Sweden, the first deliveries of German oil began. It was then that the Allies put him on the black list. His alienation from his old friends was complete. Some of them would get up and leave a restaurant if he came in. His Swedish wife suffered. She was anti-Nazi, yet she had to entertain these new friends.

In the months that followed, Erickson made other trips to Germany and continued to cultivate his friends in the Gestapo. He was invited to their homes, and would bring their wives butter and leather coats and other presents from Sweden. And he continued to make deals with other men like von Wunsch and von Stürker, though it became harder to get oil from Germany as the Allied bombings were stepped up. Once, after he had inspected a big refinery, the managing director asked him to stay to dinner. He hesitated but found it hard to decline. The meal was served in the director's office. It was nearly midnight when the party broke up and, just after, Allied bombers arrived. There wasn't any refinery left. The Allies almost put an end to Erickson's trading with the enemy.

The Allied attack on German oil was increasingly effective, yet in the latter part of 1944 a substantial portion of the industry was still functioning. Repairs were made rapidly and many refineries had been so well concealed that they were still untouched.

In the autumn of 1944 the Allied war effort was moving towards the climactic Battle of the Rhine. Erickson had to work fast if he wanted to make more deals. He had long wanted to make an inclusive tour of the German oil industry. Now was the time for it. He thought that it was one of those cases in which a salesman had to get to the man at the top—in this case Heinrich Himmler.

Erickson worked out a grandiose "big deal," the kind of thing any high-pressure salesman would love. He proposed to construct a huge synthetic oil refinery in Sweden, to cost more than

£1 million and financed by both Swedish and German capital.

This proposal was calculated to appeal to the Germans. It would put a source of oil for Germany in a neutral country, outside the reach of Allied bombers, and it was a way of planting Nazi funds in a neutral country if Germany should be defeated.

Erickson prepared a prospectus and took it to Finke, who was delighted. The Nazi bigwigs in Germany expressed keen interest. There was one dissident voice—that of Herr Ludwig. He maintained that Erickson was a phoney. Ludwig was a Foreign Office man, one of Ribbentrop's faction. More and more as the war went on that faction had come into collision with the Gestapo—in other words, with Heinrich Himmler. Himmler usually won. And so in this case Ludwig was overruled. Erickson was acceptable to the Gestapo, and the way was cleared for him to see Himmler.

IT WAS October 1944. Once more Erickson took the plane from Bromma Airport and flew over the grey waters of the Baltic and the dreary plains of northern Germany to Tempelhof Airport. He was given a suite at the best hotel in Berlin, and in the morning a big black car with its Gestapo guards called for him.

At Himmler's headquarters, the Gestapo chief greeted him cordially: "We have heard great things about you from Herr Finke." They talked at length of the refining plan, and of the need for Erickson to see, first hand, the operation of German plants. Then they went on to discuss other matters. "What would happen," Himmler asked suddenly, "if the Wehrmacht were to invade Sweden?"

"The Swedes would fight like hell," Erickson replied.

He reasoned that the way to impress Himmler was not to kotow. He was right. The result of the interview was that he was given a unique document which certified that he should be allowed to go anywhere and see anything in the oil industry. He was given a car and a generous allotment of petrol.

Erickson covered Central Europe from Cologne to Prague. He inspected Leuna, Annendorf, Halle—all the big plants. He talked

with managers, found out what they were doing and proposed to do. Like a salesman covering a new territory, he got the whole picture.

And took it back to Sweden.

WHEN the war was over, the American Legation in Stockholm gave a big luncheon for "Red" Erickson. All his old friends were invited. And he was put right with his world.

It was told how a representative of Allied Intelligence had called on him soon after the beginning of the war. How Erickson had agreed to act as a spy but had refused any pay for his services. How at his own suggestion he was put on the black list. How Prince Carl Bernadotte, with whom he had worked, was also an agent for the Allies. How the oil delivered to him from Germany was turned over to the Allies and then used against the Germans. How he had had to give von Wunsch, von Stürker and his other contacts signed letters acknowledging their services as secret Allied collaborators, for use after Allied victory. How each such paper was another sword hanging over his head, so that he could hardly sleep in Germany, waiting for the knock that would mean the Gestapo.

His information—and that of others in his hazardous line of work—paid off. In those months before the Battle of the Rhine the offensive against German oil rose to its climax. When a new plant was completed Allied pilots had it on the map and could fly directly to it, no matter how well it was camouflaged. They knew the location of the fighter strips, the ack-ack batteries and the smoke-screen installations that defended it. After they had put a refinery out of commission they knew how long it would take to repair it. On the day it was due to resume production they would return.

The supply of fuel to the Wehrmacht and the Luftwaffe was cut to a trickle. When the last great assault began, fuelless German tanks stood helplessly, fuelless German planes were grounded.

The Allies made good Erickson's promises to von Wunsch, von Stürker and the others. Herr Ludwig, however, was imprisoned and given the time to reflect on his sound judgment of Erickson.

The Hunting of the Bismarck

A condensation of the book, "The Bismarck Episode"

By Captain Russell Grenfell, RN

On the evening of 23rd May 1941, one of the greatest battles in naval history began when the "unsinkable" German battleship *Bismarck* appeared out of the mist close to the Arctic ice pack. It took four days to sink her . . . four days in which Britain's sea-faring pride was to take a heavy blow and a German myth of invincibility was to be destroyed

The Hunting of the Bismarck

IN THE MIDDLE of May 1941, Britain's fortunes were low. For nearly a year she had been standing alone, in the face of the powerful and victorious Axis powers. At sea the situation was bad and getting worse. Sinkings had reached crisis proportions and the German Naval Command was attacking Britain's sea lanes not only with U-boats and aircraft but also with surface vessels. Now word came that two large German warships, heavily screened and accompanied by eleven merchant vessels, were steaming northward in the Kattegat. One of the warships was believed to be the powerful new battleship *Bismarck*.

The question immediately arose: what were the enemy warships going to do? Were they escorting the convoy as an incidental duty and planning afterwards to break into the Atlantic? Since an Atlantic break-out was the greatest menace, the British assumed that it would be attempted and based their plans accordingly.

This meant that all the exits from the North Sea by which the Germans might reach the Atlantic must be guarded, a necessity which created a vast complexity of search and chase problems. And such operations were notoriously expensive of ships.

Sir John Tovey, commanding the Home Fleet, had a force of two battleships (*King George V* and *Prince of Wales*), two battle cruisers (*Hood* and *Repulse*) and one aircraft-carrier (*Victorious*). These odds of five ships to one look satisfactory but the *Bismarck*

was a tough problem. She was larger than any British battleship, and had a main armament of eight fifteen-inch guns, an inch larger than those of the latest British battleships, and was believed to be as fast as or faster than any British capital ship. Moreover, the Germans had demonstrated in the previous war their ability to build ships able to stand greater punishment than their British counterparts.

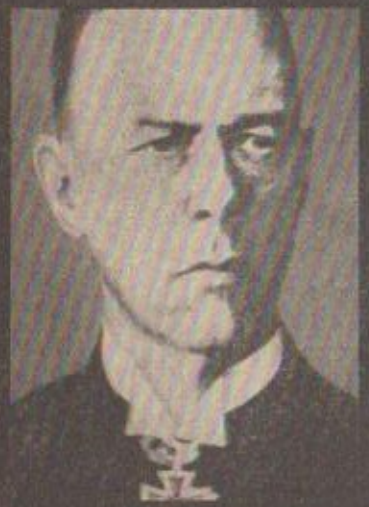
The British big ships by no means presented a similar high quality. The *Repulse* was twenty-five years old, had two guns less than *Bismarck*, was weakly armoured and of short fuel endurance. The *Hood*, although powerful, was over twenty years old while the *Prince of Wales* was too new. Two of her turrets had been installed just three weeks before, and there had not been time to "run in" the machinery. The *Victorious* was in much the same condition. She had just taken on her aircraft, the first time that the reservist pilots had ever landed on a carrier's deck. Thus Admiral Tovey (now Lord Tovey) had only the *King George V* that could be regarded as a fair match for the *Bismarck*.

The Admiral divided his heavy ships into two forces to cover the lanes into the Atlantic. The *Hood* and *Prince of Wales* would steam north; his own flagship the *King George V*, the *Victorious* and the *Repulse* would cover the passages to the Faroes to the south.

The question remained when to send these two squadrons out. Fuel supplies might play a decisive part in the success or failure of a chase which might well cover many hundreds of miles. If the British interceptor forces sailed too early and patrolled fruitlessly while the *Bismarck* was still in harbour, they would be that much short of fuel when she did emerge. On the other hand, if they delayed sailing too long, she might get out before them, with too long a start to be caught up. The only solution to this harrassing dilemma lay in accurate information of the enemy's movements.

AT 1.15 p.m. on 21st May a pilot searching the Norwegian coastline in a special Spitfire of the Coastal Command Photographic Reconnaissance Unit sighted and photographed two

The *Bismarck* in action against the *Hood*. (Photograph taken from the *Prinz Eugen*)



Vice-Admiral Guenther Luetjens; his flagship the *Bismarck* was larger and faster than any British warship

Sir John Tovey, Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet. He directed the action from the battleship *King George V*

warships in a secluded fiord near Bergen. One of them was identified as the *Bismarck*, the other as a cruiser which was later discovered to be the *Prinz Eugen*.

At midnight that night, since the *Bismarck* was not again sighted, Admiral Tovey sent the *Hood* and her squadron on their way north. The following day, 22nd May, was one of bad flying weather and of suspense. But at 7.45 p.m., when he received an aerial-reconnaissance report that the *Bismarck* and her accompanying cruiser were no longer at Bergen, he prepared to take his own squadron to sea immediately. He also sent the cruiser *Suffolk* to reinforce the cruiser *Norfolk* which was already on patrol in Denmark Strait.

On the evening of 23rd May, at seven o'clock, Captain R. M. Ellis was standing on the bridge of the *Suffolk*. He had been on duty all that day and all the night before, and indeed the night before that. Continuing bad weather had prevented any assistance from aircraft in his patrol. Most of Denmark Strait was covered in fog and mist but there was a lane of clear water about three miles wide just below the edge of the Arctic ice pack. The *Suffolk* was steering south-westward in this lane, close to the mist. At 7.22 p.m. a look-out sighted the *Bismarck* and with her the cruiser *Prinz Eugen*. They were about 14,000 yards away, a dangerously close range to enemy guns that could shoot up to 40,000 yards. Captain Ellis put his wheel over on the instant to make for the fog, and sent out the enemy-report signal.

Keeping radar contact, he manoeuvred in the mist to allow the *Bismarck* to pass him so that he could shadow her. Scrutinizing the white dots on the radar screen which showed the two enemy ships, he saw them cross his course to the north, steaming fast. Captain Ellis then steered back into the open, saw the Germans fifteen miles ahead and set course to shadow them, sending out a string of wireless signals as he went.

Deep in the mist, the *Norfolk* took in those signals. The captain was at dinner in his cabin and was munching some Welsh rarebit

when the chief yeoman of signals almost fell through the door with the excited announcement, "*Suffolk's* got 'em sir," and handed him the enemy report. Captain Phillips was on the compass platform in a moment to order the course altered to close to the enemy's reported position. At 8.30 p.m., after an hour's hard steaming, the *Norfolk* suddenly ran out of the mist and sighted the *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* about six miles away, steaming towards her on the port bow. Captain Phillips put the wheel hard astarboard to get back into the mist and made smoke to cover his withdrawal. This time the *Bismarck* was on the alert and opened a very accurate fire. By immense good fortune the *Norfolk* was not hit. Some large splinters came aboard, but she got back into the mist without suffering any damage.

After the *Norfolk* had obtained sanctuary in the mist, she, like the *Suffolk*, manoeuvred to take a shadowing position well behind the enemy. She stationed herself on his port quarter, so that the German ships could not slip away by turning in that direction. Thus did the pursuit continue, chasers and chased rushing at nearly full speed through the icy waters of Denmark Strait in the half-light of the Arctic night, in and out of the fog banks, snow and rain squalls.

MEANWHILE, Vice-Admiral Holland's squadron of *Hood* and *Prince of Wales* with six destroyers had been steaming hard to cut the enemy off. At 5.35 a.m. on 24th May he sighted the two German ships and changed course to close with them. Officers and men, who had been at their battle stations since shortly after midnight, prepared to swing the big silent turrets into action.

In the *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* excitement mounted. Now that the big ships had arrived, the cruisers' object had been successfully achieved, and their tired officers and men prepared to watch with joyful and fascinated satisfaction the destruction of the enemy. Little did they realize what they were about to see.

From now on, things happened very quickly. When the range was down to 25,000 yards the *Hood* and the *Prince of Wales* opened

fire on the *Bismarck*. The *Bismarck* and the *Prinz Eugen* at once replied. Which ship was the enemy firing at? After a tense wait for the time of flight to pass, those in the *Prince of Wales* noted, not without relief, that both German ships were firing at the *Hood*.

The principal guide-posts in naval gun battles are the splashes made by shells hitting the water. These splashes leap up to a great height—in the case of large shells to about 200 feet—and are the means whereby gun control officers know where their shots are going, and whether they are "on" target. As a rule, the gun control officer will not see his hits. With delay-action fuses, a shell may penetrate deep into a ship's hull before exploding, and the flash will be invisible from outside.

The *Prinz Eugen* scored the first hit in under a minute. A large fire broke out by the *Hood's* mainmast, spread rapidly forward and blazed up high. To the watchers in the cruisers it appeared very like the top half of a setting sun, and they held their breath wondering whether it could be brought under control. Then it died down a bit and afterwards seemed to pulsate up and down.

The range meanwhile was decreasing rapidly and the *Bismarck* had several times just missed the *Hood*. Suddenly the horrified spectators saw a vast flame leap upward between the *Hood's* masts to a height of many hundreds of feet; in the middle of it a great incandescent ball was seen soaring skyward. The volcanic upshoot of fire lasted but a second or two, and when it had disappeared the place where the *Hood* had been was covered by an enormous column of smoke. Through it, the bow and stern of the ship could just be discerned, each rising steeply up as the central part of the ship collapsed. The *Hood* had blown up in the middle, broken in half and in a couple of minutes completely disappeared.

THE *Prince of Wales* now came in for the full blast of the enemy's ferocity. A towering wall of water leapt out of the sea close at hand, where a fifteen-inch salvo had landed. It was swiftly followed by the slightly smaller splashes of the *Bismarck's*

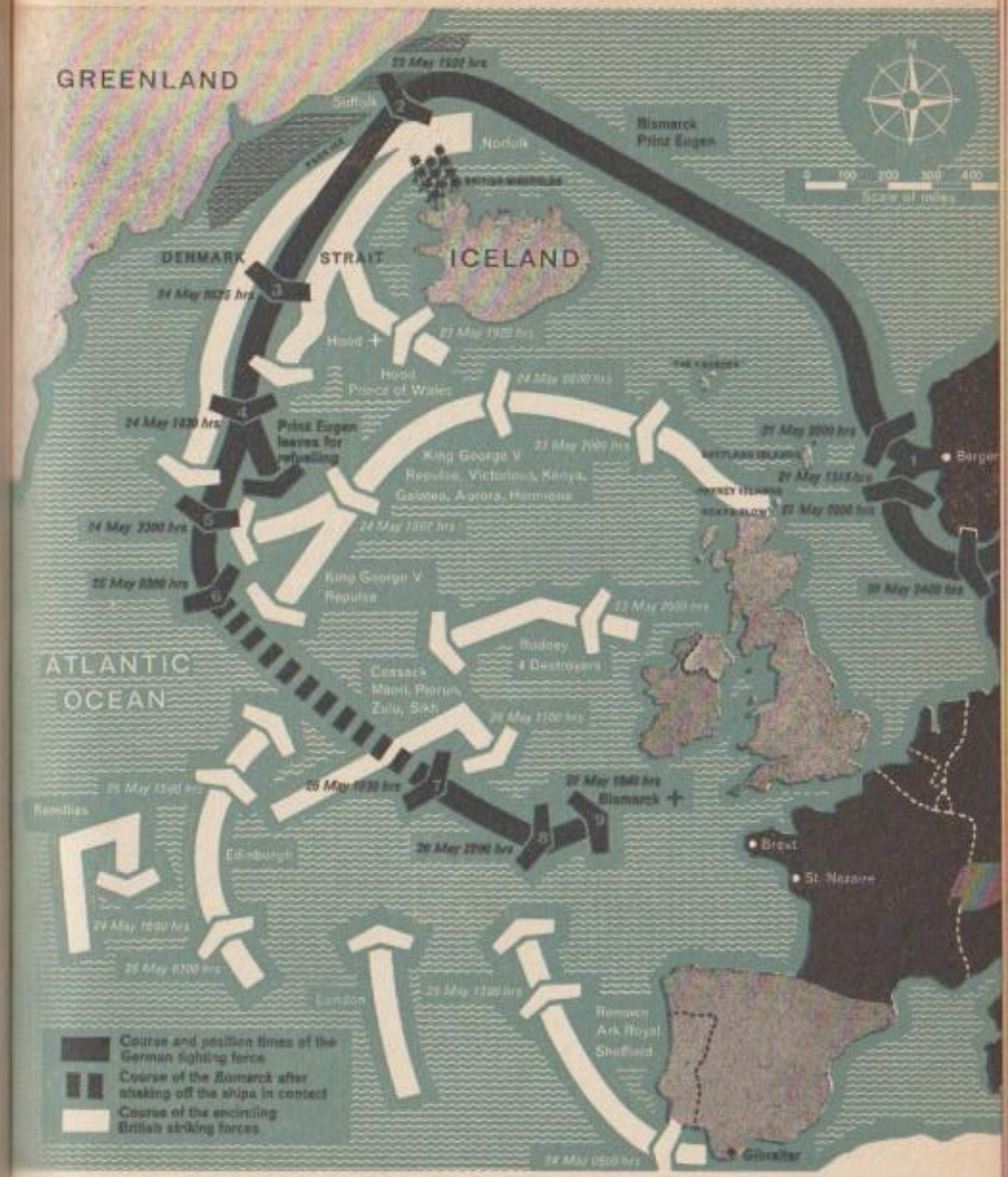
secondary-armament six-inch shells, salvoes of which, mingling with those of the *Prinz Eugen's* eight-inch, fell one on top of the other with whirlwind rapidity about every ten to fifteen seconds. The din was tremendous, the crash of the enemy's shells combining with the roaring of the *Prince of Wales's* guns and the hiss of falling spray from near-by shell splashes to make a continuous deluge of sound. So much water was being thrown up all round the *Prince of Wales*, some of it reaching up over the masthead, that it became none too easy to spot her own fall of shot.

Every now and then the ship was felt to shudder as something hit her, and those in the after control became aware of black smoke drifting past them from an obvious fire farther forward. In the midst of this turmoil a fifteen-inch shell came streaking on to the bridge, through which it smashed, exploding just as it emerged on the other side. The bridge instantly became a shambles, every officer and man killed or wounded excepting only Captain J. C. Leach himself and the chief yeoman of signals. In the plotting room just below, blood began to drip off the end of the bridge voicepipe on to the plot.

To make matters worse, the *Prince of Wales's* newness was now telling against her. Small mechanical breakdowns kept occurring in the turrets, now one gun and now another missing a salvo. The building firm's foremen of the turrets, who had been living aboard completing the final adjustment of the equipment, had come to sea with the ship. But even with their expert help in rectifying mishaps the average salvo was of about three guns instead of five.

The ship continued to take hits. Two shells pierced her side at the water-line and a number of compartments were flooded, about 500 tons of water getting in. Captain Leach, who by now had moved to the lower bridge, decided to break off the engagement and wait for reinforcements. He put his wheel over and retired from action behind a smoke screen.

The *Bismarck* made no attempt to follow, although she was showing no sign of damage. The only evidence which suggested



The Hunting of the *Bismarck*

1. An RAF Spitfire locates the *Bismarck* and the *Prinz Eugen* near Bergen
2. The *Suffolk* sights the German ships in Denmark Strait
3. The *Hood* and the *Prince of Wales* engage the enemy; the *Hood* is sunk
4. Brief action; the *Bismarck* makes off at high speed
5. Torpedo attack on the *Bismarck* by aircraft from the *Victorious*
6. British ships lose contact with the enemy
7. Aircraft re-discovers the *Bismarck*
8. The *Ark Royal's* aircraft attack
9. Final sea battle begins

that she might have been hit was a conspicuous pillar of black smoke that shot up out of her funnel after about three minutes of battle. It was as if, shaken by some heavy jolt, all the soot had fallen out of the crevices and corners of her boiler-room uptakes and had been shot high in the air on the escaping funnel gases.

THE LOSS of the *Hood* was a heavy blow to the British. She had been the biggest warship in the fleet. A generation of naval men regarded her as the world's most powerful ship. And in her first battle she had distintegrated in a burst of flame after being under fire only a few minutes. Only three survivors were ever found.

The undoubted fact is that the *Hood's* design was defective. Indeed, a year or two after her launching, naval experts pointed out that an enemy shell approaching at a certain angle would have an easy passage into a magazine. This weakness could be remedied by extra armour plating, and the Admiralty decided to have this done when the next opportunity came for an extensive refit. But the job was never done.

It remains to be said that the *Bismarck's* shooting was brilliant, far better than the Royal Navy could then show. Her fire control was extremely good and her spread of salvoes very small indeed. Her achievement was remarkable. Faced by a two-to-one enemy superiority, in five or six salvoes she had blown up one ship and in another twelve or so had driven the other out of action.

The defeat of the *Hood's* detachment threw numerous plans into the melting pot. The brilliant flash of a huge explosion had changed the situation in an instant. If it had been necessary to sink the *Bismarck* before the catastrophe of the *Hood's* destruction, it was doubly necessary after it. Although the German battleship was later reported to be leaving a broad track of oil behind her, she was now continuing south-west at full steam, apparently unscathed; and there were at this time ten convoys at sea in the Atlantic, some of which had only a screen of light vessels for protection. This potentially disastrous situation spurred the Admiralty on to more drastic action.

VICE-ADMIRAL Sir James Somerville's Force H, consisting of the battle cruiser *Renown*, the aircraft-carrier *Ark Royal*, the cruiser *Sheffield* and six destroyers, was at Gibraltar, 1,500 miles or so to the south. Its normal duty was to seal the western exit of the Mediterranean against the Italian fleet. Now it was decided to bring Force H in against the *Bismarck*. Hundreds of miles to the north-west in mid-Atlantic, the battleship *Ramillies* was ordered away from her convoy to close and intercept the enemy from the westward. About 500 miles from the Irish coast, the battleship *Rodney* was also detached from a convoy and ordered to intercept.

Within six hours of the *Hood's* destruction two additional battleships, one battle cruiser, one aircraft-carrier, three cruisers and nine destroyers had joined directly in the chase. A concentration was thus being arranged which for the vastness of the area involved and for its dramatic character had few, if any, rivals.

THE *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* had gone on shadowing after the *Hood* was sunk. The *Prince of Wales* was steaming near the *Norfolk*, and some 300 miles to the eastward Sir John Tovey on the *King George V* was pushing on towards the enemy at his squadron's best speed. With him were the aircraft-carrier *Victorious* and the *Repulse*.

For some hours the weather was clear and the cruisers kept the enemy ships in sight at fifteen to eighteen miles distance. About 11 a.m., however, banks of mist were sighted ahead. Both cruisers closed in as much as they dared, but about noon they lost sight of the enemy. Since the radar then in use had a range of only about thirteen miles, contact during the afternoon was intermittent.

Captain Ellis of the *Suffolk* had been expecting that the *Bismarck* might endeavour to turn on one or other of the shadowers under cover of low visibility and trap it at close range. Now at 6.30 p.m. his radar began to report the range as rapidly decreasing, and Captain Ellis, alert against an ambush, put his wheel over and increased to full speed. As his ship swung round, the *Bismarck* loomed out of the mist and opened fire with all her guns. Captain

Ellis ordered smoke to be made, and managed to hide behind it.

This brief action took both ships over towards the *Norfolk* and *Prince of Wales*. The latter opened fire in support of the *Suffolk*, and the *Bismarck* made away at high speed. It is now known that *Bismarck's* sally was made to cover the withdrawal of the *Prinz Eugen*, which was to make her way to an oiler for refuelling.

Thus far the British had managed to follow the *Bismarck's* course. But Sir John Tovey was worried lest she escape during the night. If she put on a sudden spurt she might give her shadowers the slip before they realized it. The only way to prevent this was to attack with the *Victorious's* aircraft. If they could only inflict some underwater damage on her, they might reduce her speed sufficiently to scotch any inconvenient spurts during the night.

Before dark, then, nine aircraft from the *Victorious* went after the *Bismarck*. This was the first occasion in history of a battleship at sea being attacked by carrier aircraft. The crews, most of them untrained for sea work, gallantly pressed home their attack. They dropped all their torpedoes, but only one was seen to take effect, and the *Bismarck* was not slowed up.

Altogether, the day was one of painful defeat and frustration. Moreover, at midnight the *King George V's* destroyers had to leave for Iceland. The long high-speed dash had depleted their fuel tanks too much for them to remain at sea. The *Repulse* also would soon have to leave for refuelling. It was all a grim reversal of fortune since the corresponding time the day before, when the *Bismarck's* career seemed as good as over.

But there was even worse to come, for at 3 a.m. on 25th May the shadow-cruiser *Suffolk* lost contact with the *Bismarck*. She was not resighted until thirty-one and a half hours later.

IT WAS a period of mounting tension, of desperate speculation as to the *Bismarck's* course, of worry over dwindling fuel supplies, above all of fear lest they were steaming away from the enemy instead of towards him.

Finally the *Bismarck* was spotted at 10.30 a.m. on 26th May, by aircraft of the Coastal Command. But meanwhile a long deviation towards the North Sea had cost the British much precious headway. From having been practically level with the enemy, they were now far behind him. And if he continued to make for France at a normal speed, it would be impossible to overtake him, for dwindling fuel supplies ruled out sustained hard steaming. Fuel expenditure rises very steeply as full speed is approached.

The *Bismarck* had a lead of about fifty miles over the *King George V* and moreover would soon be under German air cover. If she maintained her present speed of about twenty knots she could be within German bomber range by daylight the next day. Thus, if she were to be brought into action at all, her speed would have to be considerably reduced and the reduction must take place on this day, the 26th.

But how could this be done? Only by torpedoes. The only real hope lay in the *Ark Royal's* aircraft. Twenty-four hours or so earlier Force H had been 1,500 miles away. Now, pushing northward at full speed, this force might well be the only obstacle to the *Bismarck's* arrival in harbour.

When the wireless message came that the *Bismarck* had been found again, fifteen aircraft on the *Ark Royal* were prepared for the torpedo strike. At 2.30 a.m. the fly-off began. The *Bismarck* was forty miles away. The crews were told that no other ship was anywhere near. The weather had been deteriorating all day, and while the air strike was still in the preparation stage, Somerville had ordered the cruiser *Sheffield* to find and shadow the *Bismarck*. The order was flashed by signal searchlight and went only to the *Sheffield*. The *Ark Royal* never noticed her departure.

The striking force flew off a little later. The crews, flying through rain and mist, picked up a ship on their radar in roughly the expected position. Naturally assuming it was the *Bismarck*, they pressed home the attack.

It is hardly surprising that, in that tense moment, they should

have failed to recognize the *Sheffield*. They went down expecting to see an enemy, and such is the power of suggestion, that it was as an enemy that most of them saw her.

On the *Sheffield*, Captain Larcom had received Somerville's signals that the air striking force had taken off, so he was not surprised when the planes came in sight. As he turned his glasses on to them, however, he suddenly realized that they were diving down to attack his ship. Instantly he rang for full speed and put his wheel over to confuse the attackers' aim. Not a gun was fired by the *Sheffield*, and her officers and men watched in silence as the torpedoes dropped towards the water.

The first fell into the sea with a heavy splash, and the impotent observers braced themselves. A moment later their attention was focused on something even more arresting. As the second torpedo touched the water it detonated with a thunderous roar. The next did the same thing. The torpedo-heads had been armed with magnetic pistols, and these were going off on hitting the water.

Of the remaining torpedoes, three exploded innocuously. And three aircraft realized that a mistake was being made and withheld their torpedoes. Thus there were only six or seven dangerous torpedoes for the *Sheffield* to contend with. With every spare officer and man on the bridge scanning the sea for the tell-tale tracks, Captain Larcom swung the ship one way and another to avoid the torpedoes, and with such skill that all passed harmlessly by.

IT WAS a gloomy set of airmen who returned to the carrier, but they were to have another chance. With the ship rolling heavily, aircraft were refuelled and more torpedoes got ready. One lesson at least had been learned: the magnetic pistols were unreliable. It was decided to use the old and well-tried contact pistols.

By 7 p.m. the striking force was again up on deck and ranged. It was still blowing hard. Visibility was variable and heavy rain was sweeping across the sea. As the planes took off, everyone on the *Ark Royal* knew they meant to succeed this time.

About forty minutes later the *Sheffield* sighted them. She signalled "enemy twelve miles dead ahead," and they were seen climbing into the clouds. After an interval there came an outburst of gunfire, fine on the starboard bow, and the bright winking of numerous shell-bursts in the air.

The distant display of anti-aircraft fire flashed and sparkled for some minutes and then died away. There was a pause and then those on the bridge of the *Sheffield* saw first one and then two more planes flying back. They came past low and on a level with the bridge. Their torpedoes had gone, and as one flew by close the crew were smiling broadly and had their thumbs held upward. All those on the *Sheffield's* bridge and upper deck took off their caps and gave them a cheer.

When the air striking force had returned to the *Ark Royal* it was found that five planes had been damaged by gunfire. In one, 127 holes were counted, the pilot and air gunner having both been wounded. But despite all this and the failing light, only one aircraft crashed. After the crews were interrogated, it was established that one hit had been obtained amidships on the *Bismarck*.

Presently, reports to Admiral Tovey from the *Sheffield* and later from a shadowing aircraft of the *Ark Royal* indicated that the *Bismarck* had turned round in her tracks and was now moving in a general northward direction. Why was she behaving in this strange, and indeed suicidal, manner? Could it be that her rudders had been damaged and that she was no longer under control?

Confirmation of this heartening theory was received when the last straggling aircraft shadowers got back to the *Ark Royal* with practically empty tanks. When they had somehow managed to land, despite the darkness and the lively pitching of the ship, they gave important information: immediately after the aircraft attack the *Bismarck* had made two complete circles and had apparently come to a stop heading north, on which point of the compass she lay wallowing in the seas. Now the evidence was clear.

After the strain, anxieties and disappointments of the past few

days, when hope of catching the *Bismarck* had declined practically to zero, the enemy's evident disablement seemed almost too good to be true. To the senior officers, particularly, the relief was immense. They, who had known the general strategical situation as their juniors had not, had previously almost despaired of getting the *Bismarck*. They had realized that the air attack which had done the vital damage was virtually the last hope of slowing up the *Bismarck* and thus preventing her escape; and that such a last-minute attempt should be an overwhelming success was beyond reasonable expectation. It was hundreds to one against it happening. Yet, the one forlorn chance had come off.

THE NEXT DAY, 27th May, dawned with the poor visibility of a stormy horizon. At 8.15 a.m. the *Norfolk* sighted the *Bismarck* about eight miles ahead and signalled the news to the *King George V* and the *Rodney*.

At 8.47 a.m. the *Rodney's* sixteen-inch guns opened the battle. As the salvo was due to fall, the *King George V's* guns flashed. The *Bismarck* remained silent for two minutes. Then she joined in. Her third salvo straddled the *Rodney* and nearly hit her. Captain Dalrymple-Hamilton altered course to bring more guns to bear, and began to subject the *Bismarck* to heavier gunfire than she herself could develop.

At 8.54 the *Norfolk* opened fire with eight-inch guns at 20,000 yards. The *King George V* and the *Rodney*, which had now come in to even lesser ranges, brought their secondary armament into action. And at 9.04 the cruiser *Dorsetshire*, from Force H, joined in the action.

The enemy's gunnery efficiency was now noticeably falling off. During the next few minutes both British battleships went in closer, and details of the *Bismarck* were easily discernible through binoculars. Obvious signs of punishment were visible. A fairly large fire was blazing amidships. Some of her guns seemed to have been silenced and the others were firing only spasmodically. The

Norfolk saw two of the forward fifteen-inch guns run down to maximum depression, as if a British hit had caused a failure of hydraulic power in the turret.

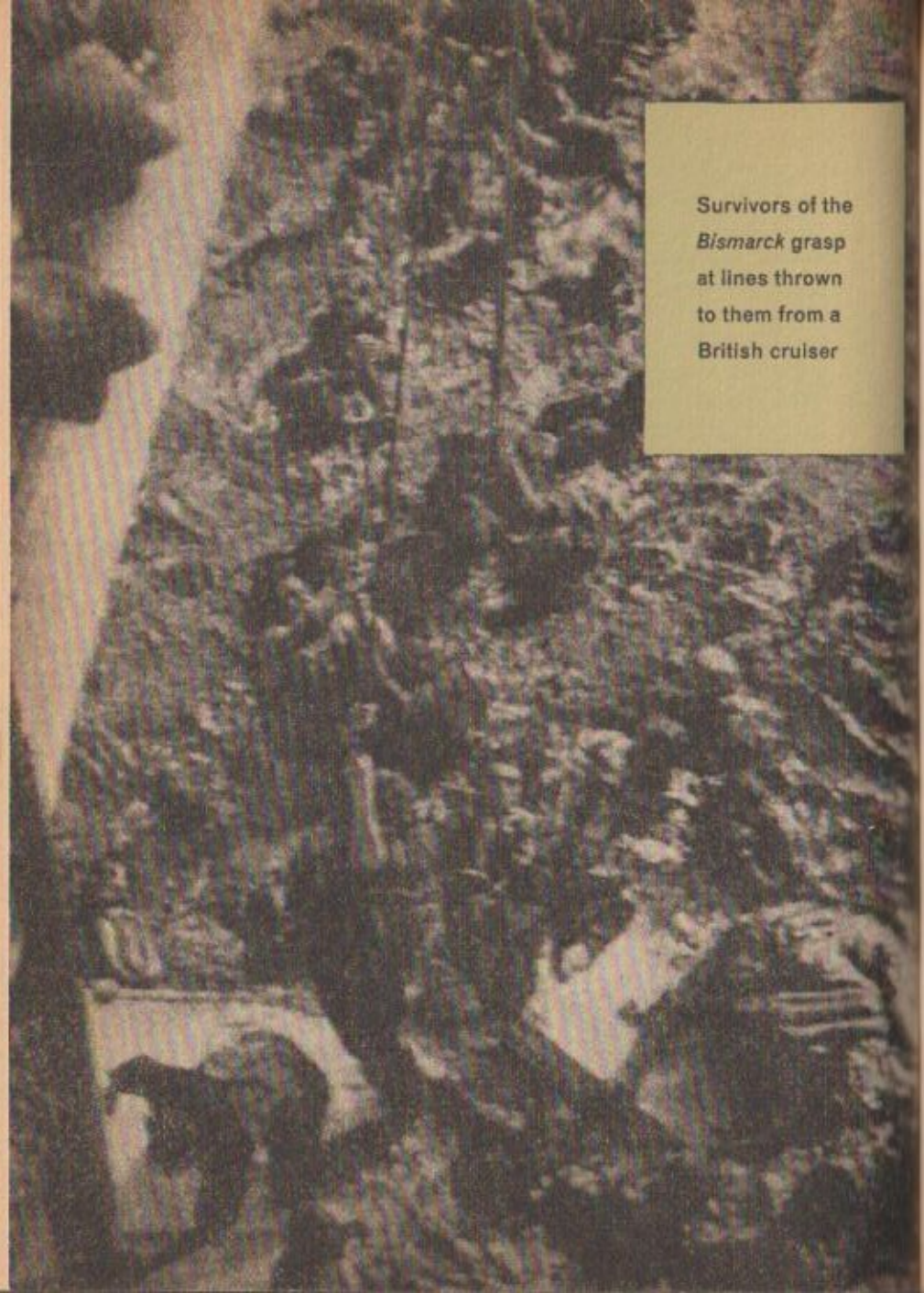
At lessening ranges, the two British battleships poured in a heavy fire from both main and secondary armament guns. A large explosion occurred just abaft the upper of the *Bismarck's* two foremost turrets which blew the back of it up over the bridge. A spectacular hit blew away the fifteen-inch aloft director, which toppled over the side.

The *Bismarck's* speed had by now been reduced to an unsteady crawl, and the British battleships had to zigzag back and forth to keep their guns trained on her. It would have been simpler to have shot the battle out on a broadside bearing; but this could have been done only by slowing down to the enemy's speed, which was too low for safety against possible submarines.

By 10 a.m. the *Bismarck* was a silent, battered wreck. Her mast was down, her funnel had disappeared, her guns were pointing in all directions, and a cloud of black smoke was rising from the middle of the ship. Inside she was clearly a blazing inferno, for the bright glow of internal fires could be seen shining through numerous shell and splinter holes in her sides. Her men were deserting their guns, and parties of them could be seen running to and fro on the upper deck as the British shells continued to rain in, and occasionally jumping over the side to escape by watery death from the terror on board.

But the *Bismarck's* flag still flew. Ostensibly, at least, she remained defiant. Powerless, and surrounded by enemies, she did not surrender.

The British were determined to sink her, and as quickly as they could. At any moment long-distance German aircraft might appear or torpedoes come streaking in from U-boats that were already amazingly late in arriving on the scene; and nagging anxiety over the acute fuel shortage added to the urgency. Sir John Tovey's impatience showed itself by a desire for point-blank range. "Get



Survivors of the *Bismarck* grasp at lines thrown to them from a British cruiser

closer, get closer," he began to tell Captain Patterson, "I can't see enough hits."

The *Rodney* was now firing nine-gun broadsides at the *Bismarck* from sixteen-inch guns, the huge shells hitting her in threes and fours at a time. A torpedo from the *Rodney* also hit the *Bismarck* amidships. The *Norfolk* believed she had obtained at least one torpedo hit. But still the *Bismarck* floated.

However, it was obvious now that the burning hulk, lying deep and sluggish in the water, would never get back to harbour, whether she sank now or later. At 10.15 a.m. Sir John Tovey on the *King George V* signalled to the *Rodney* to form astern. He had already waited dangerously long, and now he was going home.

As he steered away, the *Dorsetshire* fired two torpedoes at the *Bismarck's* starboard side, one of which exploded right under the bridge. The cruiser then steered round to her port side and fired another torpedo which also hit. The shattered leviathan, her colours still flying, silently heeled over to port, turned bottom up, and disappeared beneath the waves.

The great chase was over. The mighty *Bismarck* had been disposed of after a gallant fight against superior forces. All that remained of her was several hundred heads of swimming men, visible on the surface of the breaking seas. The cruiser *Dorsetshire* and the destroyer *Maori* managed to pick up 110 of them. Then came a look-out's report of a submarine periscope, and the British ships withdrew.

The destruction of the *Bismarck* was one of the longest continuous chases in naval history. In point of dramatic reversals of fortune, of the frequent alternation of high optimism and blank disappointment, of brilliant victory followed quickly by utter defeat, it is probably unique in warfare.

Condensed from "The Bismarck Episode," published by Faber & Faber, London

A Night to Remember

By Quentin Reynolds

IT HAD BEEN a warm, cloudless day in London, and the night was as cloudless, but star-studded, and lit by a full moon. It was Saturday, 10th May 1941.

There were about fifty of us American correspondents in London then, and for the most part we were a discouraged lot. With Russia remaining aloof, the full weight of the Nazi Air Force was being hurled at Britain. German submarines had destroyed half a million tons of Allied shipping in April alone. The British Army had been thrown back into Egypt, and it was expected that the Suez Canal would be the next to go. Greece and Yugoslavia had been lost, and Germany was gaining control of the whole Mediterranean.

Portsmouth, Southampton, Liverpool and other ports had been almost mortally injured, and the busy shipyards on the Clyde had also been bombed. Some 43,000 civilians had been killed. But London was still standing, and the people, if tired, were tight-lipped and determined.

That's how it was on that Saturday night in May. Most of us lived and worked at the Savoy Hotel. When the sirens sounded that night we paid little attention; this was routine. But an hour later we realized that this wasn't just another raid; tonight the Luftwaffe was throwing the book at us, taking full advantage of the Bomber's Moon and the cloudless sky.

The Savoy had given the Press a room and had put a man named

Titch in charge. We called it Titch's Bar. Titch was a stocky, sandy-haired man who always wore a worried look. He had a passion for clean glasses, and he spent every afternoon shining them. When bombs fell close, his look of worry always deepened; he was afraid that the concussion might break his glasses. There were several tables in the small room. One held a chess-board. Two reporters, one British and one American, completely oblivious to the din outside, were bent over it. A news teleprinter clicked monotonously, but it was a reassuring sound.

Under the almost constant explosions there was a dull crackling roar; the sound hung in the room. I walked outside. The sustained roar was louder here; across the Thames there was a solid sheet of flame among the warehouses. Tiny fireboats out in the river were throwing pitifully small streams at the flames; the water seemed to feed the angry tongues of fire that reached higher and higher.

A colleague walked out of the hotel. "The RAF says there are 400 plus over tonight. That's a lot of planes."

"We get any of them yet?"

"Only eight. Ack-ack can't get up high enough."

We went inside. The chess game was still going on. I fingered the yellow paper coming out of the teleprinter. This ticker seemed to be a link with a sane, stable world 3,000 miles away.

But the stories being tapped out seemed completely unreal. I read of "W. J. Haynes, Kansas City grain dealer," who had applied for a patent on an automatic soup bowl that sprinkled salt, cooled the soup and dunked biscuits into it. Sally Rand, bubble dancer, had performed at a Harvard University concert. When the students started their cry of "Take it off . . . take it off," she had cried back, "I will if you will." The story concluded, "Miss Rand finished her dance in a blizzard of shirts, socks and other items of men's apparel."

Could there actually be a world which read and laughed at this?

The big Savoy, all concrete and steel, shivered, and our small room was filled with the sound of a mighty explosion that made us sway a little and made our ears tingle. The blast swirled into the

room, its force dissipated, but vibrant enough to make the shining glasses on Titch's bar dance. Seven of them toppled over and smashed. Titch swore softly.

Two reporters stumbled into the room. Their faces were drawn, their clothes ragged, and their hands were scratched. They lived in a wooden house, one of a long row in Chelsea. A high explosive bomb had hit their street and destroyed every house but theirs; killed nearly everyone but them. They'd worked with the firemen, dragging the wounded from the burning buildings. Titch came from behind the bar with a bottle of brandy in his hand. "Got no iodine," he said, pouring the brandy over the cuts on their hands. "But brandy is a good disinfectant."

One of them noticed the label on the bottle and pulled his hand away. "Three-year-old brandy, Titch," he growled. "You *know* I never touch brandy that isn't twelve years old!"

We were all talking loudly because the blast had deafened us a little. But we could still hear the teleprinter. Nothing stopped that *click*-click, *click*-click.

More reports came in. It looked as if all London was on fire. The hours limped by on leaden feet. The telephone operator called to say that all wires were cut. We were isolated in our little oasis.

The lifts were running, and a colleague and I went up to the roof. It was as though we were on an island surrounded by a fiery sea. A hundred searchlights poked long, white, inquisitive fingers into the air, and the uneven sound of the German planes above was an insistent, sullen drone you couldn't shut out of your ears; it was like the buzzing of a million mosquitoes.

"Looks like they've hit the House of Commons," my colleague said, pointing.

Brilliantly white flares descended slowly, leisurely, outlining London for the bombers above. On the right, the huge dome of St. Paul's gleamed whitely.

"This is a date we'll remember," he added grimly.

We both felt as though we were sitting by the bedside of a dying

friend. We had come to know London and the people of London, and we felt close to this gallant city, and now she was dying. There could be no doubt of it, we thought. Chunks of spent shrapnel from anti-aircraft shells began to spatter on the roof. No heroes we —we went below.

Some smoke had drifted into the room, and people looked strange because the soot and the smoke had put dark, grotesque masks on their faces. Fragmentary reports kept coming in. The Ministry of Information said that the Germans had started at least 3,000 fires and that casualties among firemen and air raid wardens were high. At least 2,000 killed, the Ministry said, though it would be days before an accurate check could be made. Seventy warehouses and factories had gone up in smoke. . . .

And then a shrill sound penetrated the roar of the flames. We looked at each other unbelievingly—it was over. This was the All Clear. The dawn, greatest enemy of the night bomber, had finally arrived. But we felt that it had arrived too late.

A heavy pall of smoke hung over the city. Thin-lipped, tight-faced men and women were emerging from the Underground and the shelters. Many carried sleeping children. The flames were still shooting skyward from the burning houses; without doubt this had been the worst raid of the war.

We walked to the House of Commons. The flames had been checked, but smoke still curled out of the roof. A car stopped, and a stocky man with a cigar in his mouth got out and walked into the House. He emerged within a few minutes, and his face was angry. Churchill's eyes were unseeing and hard as he climbed into the car.

We went to the Ministry of Information. Some of our colleagues were there. An air-marshal strode briskly into the room. To our surprise he didn't seem discouraged. In fact, he was smiling.

"It's been quite a night," he said. "A lot of damage done. They did not hit the Battersea Power Station, but they hit damn near everything else. The water has failed; they're trying to pump water up from the Thames, but it'll be twenty-four hours before the fires

are under control. It probably looked bad to you gentlemen—it was, of course, the worst blitz we've had—but, gentlemen," he added calmly, "I believe we won the war tonight."

He saw the startled looks on our faces and smiled.

"You've heard us say in the Air Ministry," he said, "that any time we can inflict ten per cent casualties on a German air force we are keeping on top of them. No air force can stand such attrition for long. Our best estimate at the moment is that 450 German aircraft participated in the raid. Our incomplete figures reveal that we downed forty-five* of them. It is the first time we have inflicted such casualties in a night raid. It means that our night fighters, with their new detecting devices, are a complete success. Germany cannot afford to lose forty-five trained crews on a single raid.

"Yes, gentlemen, we who are in the Royal Air Force are very pleased indeed."

We left the building in a thoughtful mood. Could it be true—what the air-marshal had said? Had London really survived? The smoke was beginning to lift, and a strong, cheerful sun was breaking through. Incredibly, there were a dozen taxicabs outside the Ministry. The drivers looked cheerful. We drove back to the Savoy. Some streets were impassable; we had to make a few detours. But the fires had died down. Crews were already at work repairing the smashed water mains. Buses were actually running in the Strand.

" 'There'll Always Be an England,' " Titch hummed, bringing in a huge tray with pots of steaming tea and plates of toast. That song had not been popular in London. People thought it corny. But somehow it didn't seem corny now. Perhaps it was just the simple, unvarnished truth. Perhaps this England *was* indestructible. If it could survive a night like this it could survive anything.

The tenth of May, 1941. That's a night to remember, all right.

Condensed from Redbook

* The final official postwar count gave the figures as ten downed, two damaged

The Case of the Seasick Stoker

By John Rhodes Sturdy

THIS IS the story of the part played by a corvette of the Royal Canadian Navy, the *Matapedia*, in easing the suffering of countless Allied seamen during the war. In fact, there are ex-crew members of the *Matapedia* who firmly believe that our crew were responsible for winning the war. Personally I would have given our Stoker Mahoney a medal. But I was only a sub-lieutenant (temporary), and as it turned out the credit went to others—including a couple of doctors named Charles Best, co-discoverer of insulin, and Wilder Penfield, renowned head of the Montreal Neurological Institute.

They were among the eminent medical men and research scientists who developed Pill No. 2-183.

But we made it possible.

This was no ordinary pill. Officially known as the Royal Canadian Navy Seasickness Remedy, it gave protection against one of man's ghastliest miseries. Until it emerged from the laboratory in 1943, there were times when some doubt existed as to which was the greater menace in the Battle of the Atlantic: the enemy lurking below the surface of the sea, or the heaving innards of Allied seamen. Pill No. 2-183 settled the stomachs in many a rolling ship and pitching landing-craft, and no doubt helped to bring victory.

The remarkable thing about the development of Pill 2-183 is that the doctors were seeking a remedy for an ailment that, until a

short time before, did not officially exist. Throughout the centuries since man first went to sea, the medical profession had maintained a strange and stubborn attitude towards seasickness. A man might lie moaning in a ship's bunk, or be too weak to crawl to the rail, but actually nothing was wrong with him *medically*. Until, that is, His Majesty's Canadian corvette *Matapedia* made her determined and hitherto unsung stand in the dark winter of 1941.

The *Matapedia* was one of the early convoy escort-vessels built to fight the U-boat menace in the North Atlantic. Her western base was St. John's, Newfoundland; the eastern terminus was a wild and forsaken Icelandic fiord. A round trip took about a month. None of the Canadian corvettes had doctors, and we had to rely for medical advice on the odd destroyer we might meet.

Stoker Mahoney, the reluctant hero of this story, joined the *Matapedia* in December 1941. He had been trying desperately to get to sea, and this was his first ship. He was a proud and patriotic man when the *Matapedia* eased out of St. John's harbour. Ten minutes later Stoker Mahoney was flat on his back, violently ill.

Of course, he was by no means alone in his agony. By the time the little ship had settled into her familiar corkscrew motion for which corvettes were infamous, a large percentage of the crew and officers were feeling unwell. But while most of the men recovered as soon as they got their sea legs, it became apparent that Stoker Mahoney had all the symptoms of a chronic case. The chief engineer reported to the captain that the new hand was useless at his job and had been told to remain in his hammock.

As the voyage progressed, the sick stoker became cause for serious alarm. On one occasion when I went to see him, his grey face had a cadaverous look. He had lost considerable weight, and being small he now presented a frightening appearance. Moreover, he had given up interest in everything, including life.

Sixteen and a half days out of St. John's found the *Matapedia* in Iceland, tied up alongside a big British depot ship which carried several medical officers. We handed Stoker Mahoney over to them,

convinced that they would order him into sick bay for a long cure.

I was delegated to go aboard the depot ship and obtain the medical report on Mahoney. "I suppose you're here about Mahoney," the medical officer said. "There's nothing wrong with him."

"He's a seasickness case," I said.

"Nonsense. Lots of chappies get seasick," the surgeon-commander said. "He'll joggle out of it in a few days."

"Mahoney is a chronic case, sir," I persisted. "Before he joggles out of it he'll be dead."

"Now, look here," the commander said, "I've examined the chap thoroughly, and except for being a trifle undernourished, he's really in top-hole shape. Heart and lungs absolutely first-class. I can't take him off your complement without a valid reason."

We had no alternative, then, but to accept Stoker Mahoney back aboard, and when we sailed from Iceland the poor man was with us, sicker than ever.

Off the coast of Iceland we ran into an eighty-mile-an-hour gale that smashed our bridge, and when we finally reached the Atlantic coast we were ordered to Halifax for repairs. From the captain down to the most ordinary seaman there was one thought aboard the *Matapedia*: to get to Halifax before Stoker Mahoney died.

We knew he was dying, if not from seasickness, then from starvation and weakness. The voyage to Halifax was a race, and we won it. Once the ship was tied up to the jetty and motionless, Mahoney was able to keep down some nourishment. We got him off to the base medical office, trusting that this would be the first step in his journey to some landlocked naval detachment.

Two hours later he was back.

"What are you doing here, Mahoney?" the astonished officer of the watch demanded.

"I was told to report back aboard, sir," the unhappy stoker said. "I've got to rejoin my ship, they said."

"Didn't you see the medical officer?"

"Yes, sir. And he said there was nothing wrong with me."

This news was passed along to the captain, who took it grimly. It was obvious that Mahoney could not survive another spell at sea. A conference was called, and several possible courses of action were presented and promptly discarded as unfeasible.

"Actually," I said finally, "this thing is bigger than Mahoney. It touches on the entire war effort. We can't stop now. We've got to carry it right through to the end."

Starting at a low level, we progressed up the ladder through the various echelons of the Executive Branch. In some instances we received a sympathetic hearing, but everyone declared that his hands were tied. If the Medical Branch refused to accept chronic seasickness as a fact, then it was hopeless, because no one but an admiral could dictate to the Medical Branch.

"All right," our captain said, "we'll ruddy well see the admiral."

I like to think that our interview with Rear-Admiral George Jones, Commanding Officer, Atlantic Coast (Halifax), was a glorious moment in the history of the Allied forces in the Second World War. The admiral listened sympathetically to our presentation of the Mahoney case. From my back seat, where my one gold stripe was not too conspicuous, I chose the opportunity to enlarge on the theme. It was unfortunate, I said, that the RCN was a navy of small ships which did not rate medical officers. All these young medical men were rushing to the colours, anxious to wear the proud navy blue, yet except for a few appointed to destroyers or sent on loan to Britain, they were denied the opportunity of seeing the broad Atlantic from the deck of a warship.

The admiral seemed aware that there were many medical officers in Halifax at that time. He confirmed this by calling in his chief of staff, who advised him that a new draft of surgeon-lieutenants had recently arrived from Toronto.

"Fine. What is the weather forecast for tomorrow "

"Strong easterly winds, sir."

"Right," the admiral said. "Arrange for a ship to take all available medical officers on manoeuvres tomorrow."

The admiral looked at the delegation from the *Matapedia*. "Nothing like a little sea time to clear away the cobwebs," he remarked cheerfully.

The ship taking the medical party to sea was a Bangor-class mine-sweeper which, if anything, was even more uncomfortable than a corvette. She cleared the harbour at 0600 hours, crowded to the gunwales with men wearing the red and gold of the Medical Branch. Late that evening she returned.

The following morning I went to see the first lieutenant of the mine-sweeper. All he could tell me about the cruise was that it was "a ruddy shambles." Then he added, "You know, there was such a crush of those medical officers trying to get to the rail that we had to organize them in parties. We'd call out, 'First Seasick Party, ho! Advance three steps to the rail—all together now! First Seasick Party about face, Second Seasick Party, fall in!' "

Meanwhile we had worked fast. Before the medical office was open that morning, Stoker Mahoney was parked on the steps, carrying his papers and the ship's file on his case. He was first in the queue when some medical officers, still looking a little green, reported for duty. Within half an hour Mahoney was back aboard ship to get his gear, his face wreathed in smiles. He showed us the folder containing his papers. Across it was stamped "Unfit for Sea Duty," and underneath, in shaky ink—"Chronic Seasickness."

Aboard the *Matapedia* there was a victory celebration that night. We had put seasickness on the medical map.

We make no boastful claims about the subsequent course of events. Suffice it to say that when the medical profession accepts the fact that a condition exists, they usually lose no time in seeking a cure for it. So finally, in 1943, out of the laboratories emerged a mixture of hyoscine HBr, hyoscyamine HBr and ethyl-B-methyl allyl-thiobarbituric acid that became the famous Pill No. 2-183.

Let the honours fall where they may. We of the *Matapedia* will be content with this small postscript.

Condensed from Maclean's Magazine

Two Men and an Army

By Allan Michie

IN THE hot, stinking summer of 1942 Cairo was in a "flap." The German-Italian armies of Field-Marshal Erwin Rommel were but a morning's drive from Egypt's capital. The great offensive into Libya by the British 8th Army which had begun so promisingly the winter before had misfired and the British troops had fallen back towards the Nile, their armoured equipment smashed or captured.

General Sir Claude Auchinleck, Middle East Commander-in-Chief, had taken personal command of the 8th Army and rallied the bewildered, discouraged troops at El Alamein on a makeshift defence line that ran from the blue Mediterranean forty miles inland to the treacherous quicksands of the Qattara Depression. The Axis was being held, but for how long no one knew.

Barely seventy miles ahead of Rommel lay the great British naval base of Alexandria, and just beyond it the glittering prize for which Axis arms had struggled for three years—the Suez Canal, gateway to India and junction with Japan. Obviously, Rommel would be willing to risk all to reach this goal.

The indifferent Egyptians prepared to accept their Axis conquerors. Anti-British students openly cheered Rommel's name in the streets. Wives of British officers, and wealthy Britons and American businessmen hastily departed.

Less than six months later Rommel's once-proud Afrika Korps

had been humiliated. It had been chased farther than any army in history—some 1,600 miles. Penned in a narrow box between Bizerta and Tunis, it surrendered helplessly.

Many things helped beat Rommel—the excellence and quantity of British-American equipment, Allied air superiority, perfect co-operation between ground and air units. But the story of those six months which changed the course of the war and the destiny of the world is, after all, largely the story of two men and an army.

Few cocktail sippers in Cairo's Shepheard's Hotel bothered to look up that summer day in 1942 as a scrawny, long-nosed British general arrived, glanced at them disapprovingly and strode across the terrace. Few, indeed, would have recognized him, for Lieutenant-General Sir Bernard Law Montgomery, newly appointed commander of the 8th Army, was unknown except in military circles.

The army regarded him as a somewhat eccentric but competent officer with a passion for hard work; a devout, dour, humourless abstainer who neither drank, smoked nor swore. He had distinguished himself as a young officer in the First World War, and had since won the reputation of being a good divisional commander. An admirer of Oliver Cromwell, Montgomery himself had a Cromwellian streak. "I read my Bible every day and I recommend you to do the same," he had told his staff. His other favourite book was *Pilgrim's Progress.*

The troops he had commanded in Britain remembered him as a stern disciplinarian who had put them through gruelling endurance tests. A fanatic on fitness, Montgomery required all his men and officers up to brigadiers to run a seven-mile course once a week, and he usually ran the route with them. When the older officers complained, he changed it to a six-mile run.

The battle-hardened veterans of the 8th Army had heard about this "Spartan general" and weren't too sure they would like him. Before long, however, they were calling him "Monty," and crowding round for a look at him whenever he appeared.

Montgomery was actually second choice as 8th Army commander,

summoned only after Lieutenant-General William Gott had died in a plane crash on his way to Cairo. But he had long been marked for a high command. In the spring of 1942 the American Ambassador in London, John Winant, was asked to circulate among British army men, size them up, and recommend a commander suitable for British and American forces. During a visit to Monty, he asked, "General, suppose you were ordered tonight to attack Calais—how long would it take you to plan an offensive and get into action?" Winant expected an answer running into weeks. Instead, Monty phoned his staff headquarters. At dawn next day his divisions staged a full-dress mock attack against the "Germans." Winant was so much impressed that he recommended Montgomery as leader of the Anglo-American North African offensive, then in its preliminary planning stages.

General Alexander, who had been appointed to replace Auchinleck as Middle East Commander-in-Chief, was Montgomery's close friend. Both men had been in tight spots before. Alexander, an aggressive fighter whose motto was "Attack, attack and re-attack, even when you are on the defensive," had ironically been fated to conduct two of Britain's great retreats—Dunkirk and Burma.

At Dunkirk, Alexander organized the final evacuation. When one of his aides moaned, "The situation is catastrophic," Alexander retorted crisply, "I am sorry, I don't understand long words like that." His studied coolness communicated itself to the men waiting patiently for boats while Nazi dive bombers roared overhead. When there was nothing more to do but wait and suffer, he squatted on the beach and built himself a sand castle. In the fading light of the last day he toured the sands to see that no live soldier had been left behind. He and a naval officer were the last to leave.

The situation in Burma was hopeless when Alexander was flown out to take command. He was instructed to hold the Japanese as long as possible so that Wavell could organize the defence of India. With his tiny, ill-equipped army of 25,000 he fought 100,000 Japs for four months, and escaped across the only mountain road into India a few days before the monsoon made the road impassable. In

British military circles, this is regarded as a feat second only to the masterful evacuation from Dunkirk.

Montgomery had been at Dunkirk, too. He had told his men, "If you run out of ammunition, tear the enemy to pieces with your hands." After Dunkirk he and Alexander were given adjoining commands on the south and south-east of England, which was certain to bear the brunt if the Nazis invaded.

These were the two men whom Churchill brought together to save the crucial Middle East. Churchill's orders were simple: "Rommel must be destroyed." The strategy was simple: The Alamein line must be held at all costs until new equipment and reserves reached the desert, and then the Africa Korps must be pushed back. The strategical job of co-ordinating the 8th Army's advance with the British-American invasion of North Africa, then in the making, was Alexander's job. The tactics of defeating Rommel were left to Montgomery.

Wasting no time in Cairo's brain-fogging atmosphere, Montgomery drove into the desert early on the morning after his arrival and climbed the humpy Hill of Jesus, farthest advanced salient of the Alamein line. Through binoculars he scanned the enemy lines, less than 2,000 yards away across the sizzling desert.

Behind Rommel's front lines stood scores of concealed 88-mm. guns, the scourge of British and American tanks. Behind them lay at least 300 tanks and in the rear some 850 additional tanks. Rommel had 160,000 soldiers, and more were arriving every day as the Nazi supply lines improved.

The Alamein line was a bottle-neck whichever side you stood on. The British troops prevented Rommel from fanning out into the Valley of the Nile. But Rommel's troops were a cork the British would have to dislodge before they could go anywhere.

Those who saw Monty that day on the Hill of Jesus believed that he decided on the spot just how and when Rommel could be defeated. That night in his caravan-headquarters of four trailers, captured in 1941 from Italian General "Electric Whiskers" Berganzoli,

he began drafting the tactical plan that was to carry him half-way across Africa on Rommel's heels.

Montgomery realized at once that the character of desert warfare had temporarily altered. The war of tank versus tank, of sea-style battles on the wide open sands, had for the moment changed to the static trench warfare of the First World War. For the Alamein battle the offensive weapon would again be the "poor bloody infantry" of the previous war, with artillery and the air arm paving the way. The tanks would have to wait until the cork was driven out.

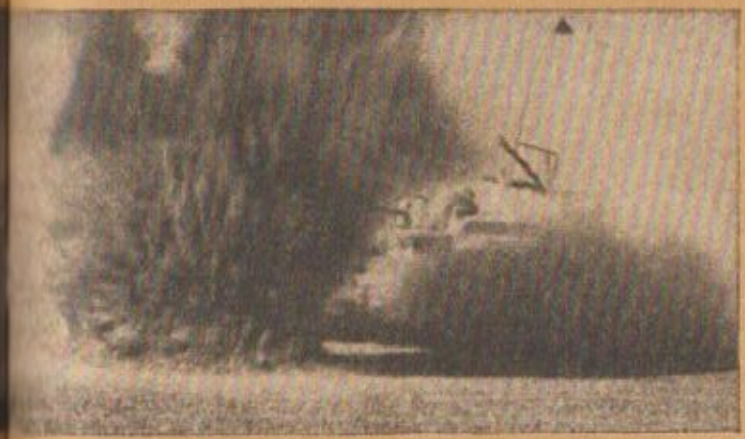
On paper, at least, Monty felt he had an even chance to succeed. If he did, and if he could destroy the German tanks, he knew that Rommel would have to cut and run. In the desert you don't stand and fight without armour.

The 8th Army already had half a dozen crack infantry divisions in the line—including tough New Zealanders and Australians, veterans of Greece and Crete, unmatched in close-quarter bayonet work; and the 4th Indian Division, which had stormed the Italian-held cliffs of Keren in Abyssinia and taken rocky "Hellfire Pass" in Egypt from the Germans. Churchill had promised two additional divisions, plentiful numbers of the new British six-pounder anti-tank gun, a great concentration of aircraft, new British heavy tanks and several hundred new American Sherman tanks with high-velocity 75-mm. guns, already being unloaded at Suez.

Monty asked for two months to get ready for an offensive. Meantime, the job was to hold off Rommel's attack. It came three weeks after Monty arrived. Rommel threw the full weight of 300 tanks against the centre and south of the line, feeling for a weak spot through which the armour could flow and flank the British positions —the traditional Rommel tactics. Monty, carefully hoarding his armour, refused to fight a battle of metal. Craftily he allowed Rommel's tanks to flow into fissures in the defences—then he met them with anti-tank guns and the 75-mm. guns of the American-made General Grant tanks, lying hull down in the sand dunes. When the Nazi commander finally withdrew he had lost 140 tanks, almost half

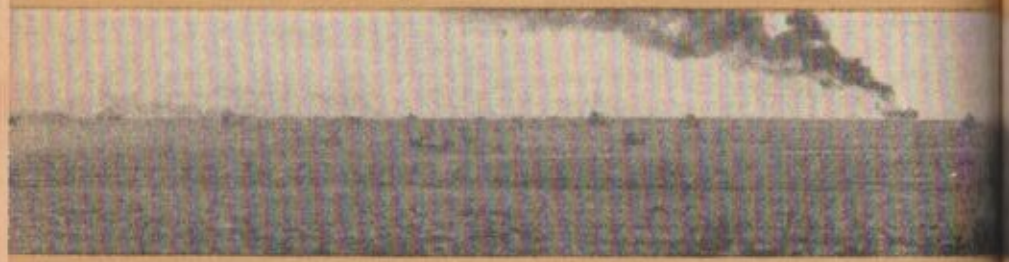
Above: Alexander and Montgomery: victors of the desert campaign

Right: Troop carriers find a path through the minefields—but come under heavy shellfire



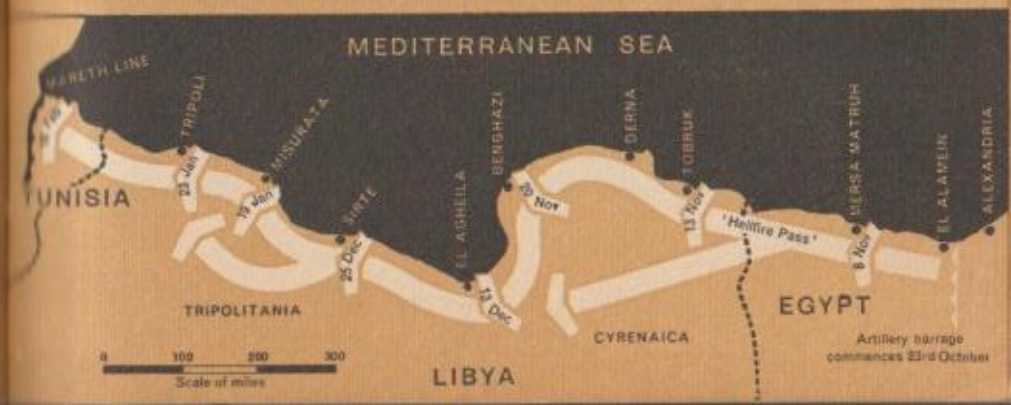
Above: The Allied artillery barrage commences. This photograph, taken from a position near the enemy lines, shows ambulances and troop carriers in position ready for the infantry attack that is to come

Left: A near miss raises a spout of sand in front of an advancing British tan



Above: A lazy pall of smoke rises from a crippled British tank as enemy squadrons appear on the horizon at Miteiriya Ridge

Left: Under cover of smoke, an Australian officer leads his men in an attack on an enemy strongpoint



his forward armoured strength. The British had lost thirty-seven.

"Egypt has been saved," announced Montgomery, confidently. "With the superiority in tanks and planes I have established as a result of this battle, it is now mathematically certain that I will eventually destroy Rommel."

Monty sounded boastful. And so he was. But he had what it took to make good all his boasts so far. He believed in meticulous planning. He insisted on knowing down to the last bullet what resources he had. On his daily visits to the front, he surprised field commanders by knowing more about their troop dispositions than they did. Every division, regiment, battalion, battery and platoon had its exact task. Monty saw that it was carried out to the letter. That was his formula for success.

His offensive against Rommel was worked out to the last tin of bully-beef. On 23rd October 1942, a night on which the moon was right for all-night fighting, he was ready to attack.

For two weeks Allied planes had been bombing strategic targets in Rommel's rear, while British and American fighter planes sought to knock the Luftwaffe out of the skies. As zero hour approached, the air attack was stepped up. Bombers shuttled back and forth to Rommel's supply lines and airfields, while fighters strafed his front lines and gun posts. Montgomery believed that every man should know what was going on and what was expected of him, so while the air attack was under way he called in his officers, told them his plans and sent them back to tell their units.

Thirty minutes before zero hour came a barrage the like of which had not been seen since the First World War. British guns stood almost hub-to-hub along the forty-mile Alamein line. Monty had always preached that a barrage should be on a scale sufficient to shake the enemy's morale. At ten p.m., while the barrage inched forward, sappers began clearing wide paths through the minefields. After them came the infantry, doggedly working forward from one Axis position to another.

All that night and the next day and for several days more the

battle swayed back and forth over this desert version of Flanders Fields. Rommel counter-attacked furiously; for every yard won and lost, men died. Then on 2nd November Montgomery judged the time had come for his surprise punch. The Sherman tanks emerged from their tarpaulin camouflage and rolled forward. At El Aqqaqir they met and trounced the remains of Rommel's 15th and 21st panzer divisions, knocking out two-thirds of Rommel's 1,000 tanks. Monty was jubilant. In an order of the day to his troops, he said, "There is good hunting to be had farther to the west. On with the task and good hunting to you all!"

Rommel hastily piled his beaten Afrika Korps into trucks, leaving most of his Italians behind because he lacked transport for them, and fled back along the coast road. Fighting occasional rear-guard actions to gain time, he retreated past Matrûh, up "Hellfire Pass," beyond Tobruk, Derna, Benghazi, around to Tripoli and into Tunisia. On his heels, relentlessly pressing forward week after week, came Monty and his avenging 8th Army. Along the way they bagged 80,000 Italian and 20,000 German prisoners. Crowed Monty: "Nothing has stopped us, nothing will!"

Twice during his long retreat Rommel tried to make a stand, at El Aghéila and at the Mareth line. Each time Montgomery smashed the Axis defences. "Rommel is a skilled general," Monty remarked, "but he has one weakness. He repeats his tactics. And that's the way I'm going to get him."

Montgomery, on the other hand, showed himself versatile. For one battle he would take a page right out of the newest German rule-book, and the next time he would take a page from history. To crack the Alamein line he followed the pattern of First World War fighting. At the Mareth line he combined a frontal assault with a daring dash through the desert round the enemy's right flank. At other points along the face of Africa he broke the enemy's defences by all-armoured attacks.

Montgomery was convinced that earlier British reverses stemmed from inadequate co-operation among aircraft, ground troops and

artillery, and he was determined not to repeat that mistake. Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham lived at Monty's headquarters and together they hammered out a design of ground-air co-ordination that not only beat Rommel but served as a model for later Allied offensive operations.

As the 8th Army pursued Rommel along the Mediterranean, the spotlight of publicity hugged Montgomery. Alexander, back in Cairo's GHQ, was almost forgotten. But for routing Rommel the two men deserve about equal credit. They complemented each other perfectly. Alexander, able to see things in broad perspective, was an ideal man for handling the over-all military and diplomatic problems of the Middle East command. The explosive Montgomery provided the spark that made the 8th Army irresistible.

Both Montgomery and Alexander were, of course, professional soldiers. Montgomery joined the Royal Warwickshire Regiment straight from Sandhurst in 1908. In the First World War he was twice wounded and won the DSO and the Croix de Guerre. Between the wars he passed through the usual chain of assignments as a staff officer in Ireland, Britain and India, taught at the staff colleges at Camberley and at Quetta in Baluchistan, and commanded a division during "the troubles" in Palestine in 1938.

Alexander, one of the Old Contemptibles, commanded a battalion of the Irish Guards at the age of twenty-four in the First World War, went over the top thirty times before being severely wounded, and won the DSO and the MC. Between the wars he helped reorganize the Latvian army, fought on India's North-West Frontier, and held commands at Gibraltar and in Britain. At forty-five he was a major-general, at that time the youngest general in the British army. Both were still comparatively young for high command when they fought the desert battle—Alexander was fifty-one, Montgomery fifty-five.

But the two men were alike only in their military background. Alexander, third son of the fourth Earl of Caledon, was a polished product of Harrow. At one time he was aide to Edward VIII. He

was one of the few generals in the British army with an adequate private income.

Monty's father was an Anglican bishop who took his family to Tasmania when Bernard was a month old. Young Montgomery was intended for the church, but as a lad he saw Australians marching off to the Boer War and decided to become a soldier.

Alexander, suave, travelled, won his points by sheer charm. He was not a man to give way easily—but he was so polite he seemed self-effacing. Montgomery was brusque and staccato-voiced. He made no effort to conceal his egotism. He had a high theatrical sense, and never missed a chance for a touch of drama. When his troops captured Nazi General Wilhelm Ritter von Thoma, Monty promptly invited him to dinner. He kept a picture of Rommel pinned over his bed and wishes that he had known the Nazi field-marshal.

Somewhere in Egypt he picked up a German officer's suit of silk underwear, which he wore. He spurned the red hatband of the staff officer, and preferred an Australian slouch hat studded with the regimental badges of his troops or a sloppy tank corps beret.

He was a martinet. He dismissed his staff officers at the slightest provocation. Once he fired an officer assigned to his headquarters before the man had time to unpack his bags. "You are a good officer but you are not good enough for me," barked Monty. He used to open his lectures with the curt order: "I do not approve of smoking or coughing. There will be no smoking. For two minutes you may cough; thereafter coughing will cease for twenty minutes, when I shall allow another sixty seconds for coughing."

When he married, at the age of forty, he ran the household with military discipline, and later issued daily orders for the care and upbringing of his only son. When someone asked him if he wished for more children he replied, "Certainly not. There is far too much staff work involved."

The Alexander-Montgomery combination had the advantage of tackling the job at a time when first-class equipment, both British and American, was beginning to reach the 8th Army. But even with

all the tanks and guns and planes, no general could have licked Rommel but for the unconquerable spirit of the fighting men who made up the 8th Army.

For almost three years they had waged heart-breaking see-saw campaigns across some of the toughest terrain in the world. They had endured the heat that turns rifle barrels hot as pokers in a fire, khamsin winds that burnt the swirling sand into their flesh, flies that covered their food and bodies, disease, disappointment and privation. Their losses had been heavy. The 4th Indian division, for example, had required 100 per cent replacement because of casualties since the opening of the desert war. All along the Mediterranean they had left their dead in shallow, lonely graves that are inscribed, "This is hallowed ground. They died in the service of their country."

Sometimes they had been badly led, as on that awful June day of 1942 when most of their tanks were sent into an ambush of Rommel's deadly 88-mm. guns. Once ninety heavy Valentine tanks rumbled on to a Nazi minefield and only nineteen came back, because someone had given a wrong compass bearing. Never had they had adequate equipment. In the early days against the Italians, they had held Egypt with fewer than 15,000 men, a few score antiquated armoured cars and eighty-seven planes.

But through long years of setbacks the men of the 8th Army refused to admit they were defeated and therefore never were defeated. They never lost confidence that, given the proper equipment, they could beat Rommel's armies. They waited a long time to prove that, man to fighting man, they were better soldiers than the Nazis.

Conceived in adversity, nurtured in defeat and retreat, the 8th Army grew in battle to be the best equipped, co-ordinated and experienced single fighting machine on the Allied side. It was left to Churchill to pay it the simple tribute of the free world when it marched proudly into Tripoli. Said the Prime Minister: "When after the war is over a man is asked what he did, it will be enough for him to say, 'I marched with the 8th Army.' "

The Girl Who Was Anne Frank

By Louis de Jong

"AND HOW do you know that the human race is really *worth* saving?" an argumentative young student once asked his professor.

Said the professor: "I have read Anne Frank's diary."

How this diary of a teen-age girl came to be written and saved is a story as dramatic as the diary itself. No one could foresee the tremendous impact that the small book would have—not even her father, who had it published after Anne's death in a Nazi concentration camp.

The Diary of Anne Frank has now been published in nineteen languages, including German, and has sold about two million copies. Made into a play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, it won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and, in the 1956–7 season alone, played in twenty different countries to two million people. In London it ran for nearly six months at the Phoenix Theatre. Twentieth Century-Fox turned it into a film.

To understand this amazing response it is necessary first to understand the girl who was Anne Frank.

When Hitler came to power, Otto Frank was a banker, living in Germany. He had married in 1925. In 1926 his first daughter, Margot, was born, and three years later his second, Annelies Marie. She was usually called "Anne," sometimes "Tender one."

In the autumn of 1933, when Hitler was issuing one anti-Jewish

decree after another, Otto Frank decided to emigrate to the hospitable Netherlands. He started a small firm in Amsterdam. Shortly before the outbreak of the war he took in a partner, Mr. Van Daan, a fellow refugee. Mostly they traded in spices. Business was often slow. Once Otto Frank was forced to ask his small staff to accept a temporary cut in their modest wages. No one left. They all liked his warm personality. They admired his courage and the evident care he took to give his two girls a good education.

As a pupil Anne was not particularly brilliant. Most people believed like her parents that Margot, her elder sister, was more promising. Anne was chiefly remarkable for the early interest she took in other people. She was emotional and strong-willed; "A real problem child," her father once told me, "a great talker and fond of nice clothes." Life in town, where she was usually surrounded by a chattering crowd of girl friends, suited her exactly. This was lucky because the Frank family could only rarely afford a holiday.

When the Nazis invaded the Netherlands in May 1940, the Franks were trapped. Earlier than most Jews in Amsterdam, Otto Frank had realized that the time might come when he and his family would have to go into hiding. He had decided to hide in his own business office, which faced one of Amsterdam's tree-lined canals. A few derelict rooms on the upper floors, called the "Annexe," had been secretly prepared to house both the Frank and the Van Daan families.

Early in July 1942, Margot Frank was called up for deportation, but she did not go. Straightaway the Franks moved into their hiding place, and the Van Daans followed shortly afterwards. Four months later they took into their cramped lodgings another Jew, a dentist.

They were eight hunted people. Any sound, any light might betray their presence. A tenuous link with the outside was provided by the radio and by four courageous members of Otto Frank's staff, two of them typists, who in secret brought food, magazines and books. The only other company they had was a cat.

While in hiding, Anne decided to continue a diary which her parents had given her on her thirteenth birthday. She described life in the Annexe with all its inevitable tensions and quarrels. But she created first and foremost a wonderfully delicate record of adolescence, sketching with complete honesty a young girl's thoughts and feelings, her longing and loneliness. "I feel like a song-bird whose wings have been brutally torn off and who is flying in utter darkness against the bars of its own cage," she wrote when she had been isolated from the outside world for nearly sixteen months. Two months later she had filled every page of the diary, a small book bound in a tartan cloth, and one of the typists, Miep, gave her an ordinary exercise book. Later she used Margot's chemistry exercise book.

Her diary reveals the trust she puts in a wise father; her grief because, as she feels it, her mother does not understand her; the ecstasy of a first, rapturous kiss, exchanged with the Van Daans' seventeen-year-old son; finally, the flowering of a charmingly feminine personality, eager to face life with adult courage and mature self-insight.

On a slip of paper Anne wrote faked names which she intended to use in case of publication. For the time being the diary was her own secret which she wanted to keep from everyone, especially from the grumpy dentist with whom she had to share her tiny bedroom. Her father allowed her to put her diaries in his brief-case.

He never read them until after her death.

On 4th August 1944, one German and four Dutch Nazi policemen suddenly stormed upstairs. (How the secret of the Annexe had been revealed is not known.) "Where are your money and jewels?" they shouted. Mrs. Frank and Mrs. Van Daan had some gold and jewellery. They were quickly discovered. Looking round for something to carry them in, one of the policemen noticed Otto Frank's brief-case. He emptied it on to the floor, barely giving a glance at the notebooks. Then the people of the Annexe were arrested.

In the beginning of September, while the Allied armies were

rapidly approaching the Netherlands, the Franks and Van Daans and the dentist were carried in cattle-trucks to Auschwitz—the Nazi death-camp in southern Poland. There the Nazis separated Otto Frank from his wife and daughters without giving them time to say farewell. Mrs. Frank, Anne and Margot were marched into the women's part of the camp, where Mrs. Frank soon died from exhaustion. The Van Daans and the dentist, too, lost their lives.

Anne proved to be a courageous leader of her small Auschwitz group. When there was nothing to eat, she dared to go to the kitchen to ask for food. She constantly told Margot never to give in. Once she passed hundreds of Hungarian-Jewish children who were standing naked in freezing rain, waiting to be led to the gas-chambers, unable to grasp the horrors inflicted upon them in the world of adults. "Oh look, their eyes . . ." she whispered.

Later in the autumn she and her sister were transported to another camp, Belsen, between Berlin and Hamburg. A close friend saw her there, "cold and hungry, her head shaved and her skeleton-like form draped in the coarse, shapeless, striped garb of the concentration camp." She was pitifully weak, her body racked by typhoid fever. She died early in March 1945, a few days after Margot. Both were buried in a mass grave.

In Auschwitz, Otto Frank had managed somehow to stay alive. He was freed early in 1945 by the Russians and in the summer he arrived back in liberated Amsterdam. A friend had told him that his wife had died, but he kept on hoping that Anne and Margot would return. After six weeks of waiting he met someone who had to tell him that both had perished. It was only then that Miep, his former typist, handed him Anne's diaries.

A week after the Frank family had been arrested, Miep had boldly returned to the Annexe. A heap of papers lay on the floor. Miep recognized Anne's handwriting and decided to keep the diary but not to read it. Had she read it, she would have found detailed information on the help she and other people had given the Frank

family at the risk of their own lives, and she might well have decided to destroy the diary for reasons of safety.

It took Otto Frank many weeks to finish reading what his dead child had written. He broke down after every few pages. As his old mother was still alive—she had emigrated to Switzerland where other close relatives lived—he started copying the manuscript for her. Some passages which he felt to be too intimate or which might hurt other people's feelings were left out by him. The idea of publishing the diary did not enter his mind. He gave one typed copy to a close friend, who lent it to a professor of modern history. Much to Otto Frank's surprise the professor devoted an article to it in a Dutch newspaper.

His friends now urged Otto Frank to have Anne's diary published as she herself had wished; in one passage she had written: "I want to publish a book entitled *The Annexe* after the war. . . . My diary can serve this purpose." When Anne's father finally consented to publication, the manuscript was refused by two well-known Dutch publishers. A third decided to accept it and he has sold more than 150,000 copies of the Dutch edition.

Other editions followed—250,000 sold in Britain, a like number in Japan, 435,000 in the United States. Otto Frank began to receive hundreds of letters. One, from Italy, was addressed: "Otto Frank, father of Anne Frank, Amsterdam." A few people doubted the authenticity of the diary; most wrote to express their admiration and grief. Girls of Anne's age poured out their troubles: "Oh, Mr. Frank," wrote one girl, "she is so much like me that sometimes I do not know where my self begins and Anne Frank ends." Numerous people sent small presents. Some exquisite dolls were made for him by Japanese girls. A Dutch sculptress presented him with a statue of Anne. On the birthdays of Anne and Margot flowers arrived anonymously.

So many letters poured in that Otto Frank was forced to retire from business. The care of his daughter's diary has become his passion, his mission in life. He now lives modestly in Swizerland.

All royalties are devoted to humanitarian causes which, he feels, would have been approved by Anne. All letters are answered by him personally. Every day new ones sadly remind him of the losses he has suffered, but he feels that there is truth and consolation in what the headmistress of one of Britain's largest schools wrote to him: "It must be a source of deep joy to you—in all your sorrow —to know that Anne's life is, in the deepest sense, only just beginning."

The most remarkable response came from Germany. When the book's first printing of 4,500 copies came out in Germany in 1950, many booksellers were afraid to put it in their windows. Now sales of the German paper-back edition have reached astonishingly large figures.

When the play opened in seven German cities simultaneously, no one knew how the audiences would react. The drama progressed through its eight brief scenes. No Nazis were seen on the stage, but their ominous presence made itself felt every minute. Finally, at the end, Nazi jackboots were heard storming upstairs to raid the hiding place. At the close of the epilogue only Anne's father was on the stage, a lonely old man. Quietly he told how he received news that his wife and daughters had died. Picking up Anne's slim diary, he turned back the pages to find a certain passage and, as he found it, her young, confident voice was heard, saying: "In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart."

Packed audiences received Anne Frank's tragedy in a silence heavy with remorse. In Düsseldorf people did not even go out during the interval. "They sat in their seats as if afraid of the lights outside, ashamed to face each other," someone reported. The Düsseldorf producer explained: "*Anne Frank* has succeeded because it enables the audience to come to grips with history, personally and without denunciation. We watch it as an indictment, in the most humble, pitiful terms, of inhumanity to fellow men. No one accuses us as Germans. We accuse ourselves."

For years Germany's post-war administrators toiled to make

people feel the senseless and criminal nature of the Nazi régime. On the whole they failed. *The Diary of Anne Frank* succeeded. The play has been presented in numerous cities and been seen by more than a million Germans. Leading actors have received dozens of letters. "I was a good Nazi," a typical letter read, "but I never knew what it meant until the other night." German schoolchildren sent Otto Frank letters telling him that Anne's diary had opened their eyes to the viciousness of racial persecution.

In West Berlin an Anne Frank Home was opened, devoted to social work for young people. The people of Berlin had chosen her name "to symbolize the spirit of racial and social tolerance." Elsewhere in Germany an organization was set up and named after her, to fight the remaining vestiges of anti-Semitism. In Vienna money was collected for the Anne Frank forest, to be planted in Israel.

More than 2,000 young Germans once attended a ceremony at the mass graves of Bergen-Belsen where Anne Frank had found her last resting place. As they laid flowers on the graves, a seventeen-year-old schoolgirl expressed what all felt: "Anne Frank was younger than we are when her life was so horribly ended. She had to die because others had decided to destroy her race. Never again among our people must such a diseased and inhuman hatred arise."

Anne's brief life has, indeed, only just begun. She is carrying a message of courage and tolerance to every part of the world. She lives after death.

Blueprint for Pearl Harbour

By Edwin Muller

THE JAPANESE attack on Pearl Harbour, as everyone knows, followed a craftily conceived and elaborately detailed plan. But as few people outside the US Navy know, *that plan was not conceived in Tokyo.* It was created in Washington by the US Naval Planning Board.

The story goes back to January 1932 when the US fleet of nearly 200 warships, perhaps the most tremendous concentration of naval power ever assembled up to that time, gathered in Californian waters for manoeuvres which were to test the defences of Pearl Harbour. One part of the fleet would "attack"; the other, with the army garrison, would "defend."

The attacking fleet revolutionized naval strategy when, leaving all the proud battleships and cruisers behind, two aircraft-carriers—the *Saratoga* and the *Lexington*—streaked across the eastern Pacific with four destroyer escorts. Admiral H. E. Yarnell himself was on the *Saratoga* (instead of a battleship), in command of a brand-new naval group called a "task force." The Admiral was an air-minded officer who had made many flights with his squadrons—unusual in the US Navy of that day. Now he was applying the new carrier attack strategy on an objective already familiar to him from the air.

The defence of Pearl Harbour, planned primarily to meet a naval attack, was entrusted to a fleet that protected the approaches to the islands, a flotilla of submarines in the harbour, a full division of

troops ashore and an immense concentration of heavy coast artillery which could be rapidly shifted on a well-planned system of railways and roads. An air defence had also been superimposed—batteries of anti-aircraft guns and 100 fighter planes and bombers.

As he had hoped, Admiral Yarnell ran into thick weather twenty-four hours off Oahu. This made it less likely that the defending fleet would spot him. Two carriers and four destroyers are a rather small group on the ocean—especially when the defenders are expecting a great invasion fleet. Nobody did see them.

By dusk on Saturday, 6th February, they were in position to reach Oahu by dawn in a forced run. Early on a Sunday morning, the Admiral reckoned, the defending forces might be a little less alert.

When darkness fell, the task force, running without lights and in radio silence, drove ahead full speed through rain squalls, low clouds and a rising wind. It was excellent weather in which to escape observation, but could they get the planes off in it? The destroyers were dipping their rails and even the big carriers were rolling heavily.

Admiral Yarnell held his planes until less than half an hour before dawn, when he was sixty miles off Oahu. Then, in the pitch darkness, 152 of them took off miraculously from the carriers pitching in the heavy seas.

This first aerial attack on Pearl Harbour came in from the north-east, exactly as the second and lethal Japanese attack was to do nine years later. Most of the winter the trade wind blows steadily from the north-east against the 2,800-foot Koolau Range, where it discharges its moisture. This condition is made-to-order for attack, because an air force can approach hidden in the towering wall of rain clouds and then emerge suddenly into clear weather over Pearl Harbour before defending planes can rise to intercept.

And so it happened on Sunday, 7th February 1932, when the bombers, fighters, dive bombers and torpedo planes from the *Saratoga* and *Lexington* emerged from the clouds to find the greatest naval base in the world spread helpless beneath them. Each group had its appointed task. The fighters "knocked out" the planes on the

ground by simulated machine-gun strafing. No defending plane went up during the attack. Other groups, meanwhile, dropped their theoretical bombs on the military installations or "sank" all the hypothetical vessels in the harbour.

Complete domination of the air had been attained by the attackers. If the entire fleet had been lying in the harbour, and if Admiral Yarnell's flyers had carried real bombs, they could have sunk or damaged every ship.

The commanding officers of the navy held a "critique" right there in the theoretical ruins. The discussion there began was continued in naval circles everywhere. Many strategists saw that something had happened which was to upset all existing naval concepts.

Of course there were some who discounted what had occurred, saying it had been due largely to the element of surprise. It is true that the defenders were less alert on that Sunday morning; yet it seemed likely that even if they had been alert they would not have been able to meet the attack effectively.

Some high-ranking officers wanted to go a long way in revising the entire basis on which the US navy was organized. They advanced the revolutionary idea that the navy, instead of being organized round the battleship with air power as one of its supports, should be based on air power with the battleship and other surface craft as supports. Unfortunately their views were not heeded.

Not heeded, that is, *in Washington*. For the critique at Pearl Harbour wasn't the only one held on the manoeuvres. The navy now knows that another took place soon after in Tokyo.

When the planes flew in for the mock attack, the highly efficient Japanese spy organization in Oahu had observers on all the high points of the island, each with a plausible reason for being there. There were watchers in the thick brush that borders the harbour. Small one-engined sampans "fished" off-shore. And there were listeners later in Honolulu wherever navy men gathered.

After intensive study in Tokyo, the information thus obtained formed the basis for a series of secret manoeuvres. We discovered

later that the Japanese naval experts concluded—as had some US admirals—that the primary weapon of the modern navy is air power and that the striking force of a fleet should be built round its air arm rather than round its surface craft. And so, learning from the manoeuvres what American battleship admirals unfortunately refused to learn from them, the Japanese navy was basically reorganized.

The Japanese further realized that they had been presented with a brilliant and workable plan for putting the greater part of the United States Fleet out of commission. They carried out that plan on 7th December 1941.

On 8th December officers who had flown the planes from the *Saratoga* and *Lexington* in 1932 read the details of the Japanese attack with bitter understanding. Yes—this, and this, and this—yes, that was exactly how it was done nine years ago.

In some ways the problem of the Japanese on 7th December was more difficult than that of the manoeuvres. Theoretically the defence was stronger. Great progress had been made in the development of devices for the detection of approaching aircraft. But, because of the lack of alertness of the defending forces, the Japanese planes were a complete surprise when they burst through the cloud wall over the Koolau Range.

In other ways the problem had been made easier. Planes were bunched conveniently on the airfields and were easily strafed. And nearly all the battleships in the Pacific Fleet were in the harbour.

The Japanese used about the same number of planes as Admiral Yarnell. Their losses were about the same as his theoretical losses. And so were their accomplishments.

The tragedy of Pearl Harbour tore up the old plans. For it happened that, while all the principal American battleships were in Pearl Harbour on 7th December, no carriers were there. *Of necessity*, then, the carrier replaced the battleship as the capital ship. The carrier task force automatically became the chief naval weapon. Almost at once the US Navy began to use it with great skill—at Coral Sea, Midway, Guadalcanal, Rabaul, the Marshalls and Truk.

Direct hit on the powder magazine of the destroyer *Shaw*. The American fleet suffered more damage in an hour than it had during the whole of the First World War

The Infamous Seventh of December

By Blake Clark

I HAVE BEEN close to the horrors and glories of one of the most crucial battles in America's history. Its beginning was a calm, sunny Sunday morning in one of the most peaceful spots in the world. Its ending saw many American planes destroyed, ships disabled, oil burning on the water, men swimming in it, nearly 3,000 lives lost. "More damage in one hour than the US fleet suffered during the whole of the First World War."

I heard the rumbling noise of what I thought was coast artillery practice as we were eating our breakfast.

Yamato came running in from the kitchen. "Plenty plane outside!" he exclaimed.

From the back porch we could see a squadron of planes high above. Over Pearl Harbour we saw the sky dotted with black puffs of smoke.

"That's good," said Mr. Frear, with whom I lived. "We *ought* to get ready."

Then a neighbour rushed in.

"The Japanese are bombing Oahu!" she cried.

"Oh, no, it's only practice. Don't get excited," we said.

"If you don't believe it," she exclaimed, "turn on your radio and hear for yourselves!"

I did. "Keep calm, everybody. Oahu is under attack. This is no joke. The emblem of the Rising Sun has been seen on the wings of

the attacking planes." I recognized the voice of Webley Edwards, the local radio station manager.

Just then a car turned into the drive and came to a quick stop. A woman in a Red Cross uniform ran up the steps. "Come on!" she shouted. "We need help!"

I spent that day with her Red Cross unit, evacuating civilians from attacked areas. With my own eyes I saw much of what had happened. In the days after, I talked with everyone I could: commanding officers and seamen, the wounded and the unhurt, the heroes and the anonymous workers whose collective response to duty was as important as the extraordinary feats of individuals. This is their story, plain and straightforward, as it was told to me.

PEARL HARBOUR, the United States' largest naval base, was the real objective, but before it could be attacked the Japanese had to disable the airfields which were an essential part of its defences. The army's Wheeler and Hickam airfields, the navy's air base at Kaneohe, and the marines' uncompleted air base at Ewa were all within quick flying time of the Harbour.

The Japanese tried to ground every available plane. They approached from two directions simultaneously. The method of attack on each airfield was the same. While low-flying planes dropped well-directed bombs on hangars, other planes sprayed the long, orderly rows of aircraft on the ground with incendiary bullets.

Typical of the surprise of the attack was the experience of the commanding officer at the naval air base. He was having his breakfast coffee. Hearing planes, he looked out of the window and saw three flights of three planes each, flying low and making a right turn into the entrance of the bay.

"Those fools know there is a strict rule against making a right turn!" the commander exclaimed, leaping to his feet.

His young son said, "Look, red circles on the wings!"

The first alarm was the screeching of the commander's car tyres coming downhill to the administration building.

The mustard-yellow planes now flew low, one behind the other, no more than fifty feet above sea planes that lay anchored in the bay. A hundred yards away two boats of young seamen were passing each other, the crews of the anchored planes. The Japanese opened up. Machine-gun bullets made a wide lane of geysers that led straight to the boats and the anchored planes. The planes went up in flames. A few of the men escaped.

The Japanese flew to the end of the bay, made a loop and came back, heading straight for a line of bombers on the ramp and strafing them mercilessly. They came back again. Heedless of the strafers, gun crews rushed out to salvage machine-guns from the burning planes and set them up. Streams of fire converged upon the attackers. For fifteen or twenty minutes this strafing attack kept up, the line of planes going continuously up and down, crossing each time directly over the planes on the ramp.

During the lull which followed, men commandeered all available cars and drove them to staggered positions on the field so that if enemy planes tried to land they would crash on the cars. Civilian employees helped to put out fires and manned bulldozers to push burning planes away from the hangars.

Twenty minutes and the Japanese were back. They dropped a tremendous bomb on one hangar. They shot up the hurrying people on the ramp. One bullet went through a concrete wall at least a foot thick.

Everywhere the gallant fighters answered back, but the attackers were flying fast and were hard to hit. Two planes were brought down. The rest flew on towards the marine base at Ewa. Here the first wave concentrated fire on grounded aircraft. During the momentary lull which followed, marines rushed out and dragged unburnt planes off the runway, and mounted free machine-guns on them. The second attack was more vicious than the first. There was no protection; cannon and machine-gun fire churned the ground. Yet the men stuck to their guns, pouring a stream of fire at each Japanese plane as it dived past.

Throughout the attack every man carried out his emergency duties. The marines distributed the ammunition, cleaned and serviced the guns, and got in telling shots at the enemy. Moving vehicles were special targets of attack, yet drivers of ammunition trucks and ambulances made their trips to every part of the field without looking first to see if the sky was clear. Usually it was not.

The marines had a one-man fire engine. In the midst of the first attack, driver Shaw climbed into his seat and set out for a line of burning planes. Strafers attacked the bright red engine before it got half-way to the planes. Shaw did not stop until a third wave shot the tyres off his wheels.

LIEUTENANTS Welch and Taylor, sitting in the officers' club at Wheeler Field, saw dive bombers swoop low over the ammunition hangar and drop their load. The lieutenants hurried outside, jumped into their car and rushed to their planes. They did not stop to hear the size or number of planes attacking, but took off and headed straight for a squadron of a dozen or more of the Japanese bombers flying over Barber's Point. They accounted for three of the enemy planes before they had to return for refuelling.

One of Welch's three machine-guns jammed, and Taylor was wounded in the arm and leg. Before Welch's gun could be unlocked or Taylor's wound receive first aid, a second wave of fifteen Japanese planes swept in. Taylor had been advised not to return to the air because of his wounds, but he and Welch took off immediately in pursuit.

The Japanese were soon on Taylor's tail. Welch, behind them, dived on the one most dangerous to his partner. The Japanese rear gunner poured rounds into Welch's plane; bullets struck the engine, the propeller, the cowling. Still Welch pursued like an avenging fury, letting fly with his two remaining guns. The enemy plane burst into flames and crashed. Taylor escaped. Welch followed another plane seaward, caught it five miles off-shore and gave its two-man crew an ocean grave.

These fighters were not alone. An old-timer, Lieutenant Sanders, led a unit of four planes up through an overcast of 6,000 feet. He saw a group of six Japanese bombing an airfield and signalled his men to attack. The Japanese saw them and fled. The unit came in fast. Sanders opened up on the leader. The Japanese plane smoked up, faltered, and fell into the sea.

Lieutenant James Sterling was hot after one of the enemy. A Japanese plane was on his tail. Sanders closed in, but the attacker was already pouring bullets into Sterling's plane, and it burst into flames. The American continued to fight the Japanese plane ahead, and they all went into a dive—the Japanese in front, Sterling still firing at him, the second Japanese after Sterling, and Sanders following through. Down they plunged. Only Sanders pulled out of the dive.

In the pineapple fields of Wahiawa, thousands of people watched a dog-fight between Lieutenant Rasmussen and a Japanese. Rasmussen pulled up out of a dive and caught the enemy plane in his sights. Tracer bullets ripped into it. The anxious thousands broke into a resounding cheer when the Japanese plane fell in flames to the ground.

When Rasmussen landed, he found that his rudder had been shot away, his radio equipment pulverized, and the fuselage was as full of holes as a sieve.

THE FIRST WAVE of bombers to arrive over Hickam Field chose as its objective the quarter-mile row of planes drawn up in front of the hangars in orderly formation. Ignoring the merciless strafing, the men at Hickam worked furiously to disperse the planes. Some faltered and fell, but others took their places. While the fire brigade fought flames at the tail of some planes, daring ground-crew jumped on to the wings, unfastened the heavy engines, and pulled them to the edge of the apron. Many fine engines, later to be of vital importance, were saved by their quick thinking.

In the second and most destructive raid, two rows of high-flying

bombers dropped heavy demolition bombs directly on the most populous section of Hickam Field. For what seemed a full minute after the bombs had landed nothing happened. Then the mess hall, the guard-house, the fire station, the huge barracks, and an immense hangar all seemed to rise intact from the ground, poise in mid-air, and drop back to the earth in fragments.

The third wave came strafing. Now ground defences were going full blast and accounted for several raiders. Inexperienced men acted like veterans, time and again dashing out under fire and taking over machine-guns whose operators had just been killed.

Two Japanese boys at work on a defence project when the attack began saw a machine-gunner having trouble setting up his gun. They helped him anchor it and fed ammunition while he fired. They loaded so fast that they had to be given emergency treatment for burns. When a Japanese plane fell near them they cut the insignia off the pilot's shoulders for souvenirs.

On the apron opposite the hangars one man kept up a steady stream of fire from a machine-gun which he had set up in the nose of a bomber. An enemy plane turned the bomber into a flaming death trap. The gunner did not even try to get out. Long after the leaping flames had enveloped the nose of the plane, spectators saw the red tracer bullets from his machine-gun mounting skyward.

THE JAPANESE also found time to do a bit of incidental strafing and bombing of civilians. They riddled cars along the roadways, killing and wounding their passengers. They blew the tyres off the car of a major who was returning with his wife and children from church.

At Pearl Harbour a sailor's wife saw the attack and sent her daughter to bring her small son indoors. The girl ran down the path to where her little brother was playing with a small wooden wagon. As they started back to the house, a plane flew low above them and spattered the path with machine-gun bullets. The little wagon flew to pieces on the lawn.

Along Alewa Heights we saw children grouped round a man

who held in his arms the limp body of a young girl. The family of five had been standing on the doorstep when a bomb fell. A piece of shrapnel had flown straight to his daughter's heart.

ALL THAT happened at the airfields was only a prelude. The attack on Pearl Harbour itself lasted from 7.55 a.m. to 9.15 a.m. There were probably 150 Japanese planes—torpedo-carriers, strafers, dive bombers, and high-altitude bombers. In the spacious waters were battleships, cruisers, destroyers, mine-layers—a large part of the US Navy. Every Japanese plane seemed to have its objective selected in advance, for they separated and each went to attack a specific warship.

Horizontal bombers, flying at about 12,000 feet, dropped armour-piercing bombs almost simultaneously on the battleship *Arizona*. One sped straight down the funnel and blew up the ship's forward magazine. Instantly torpedoes joined the bombs and the forward part of the ship blew up. Bodies flew 300 feet into the air, hurled about as tiny particles are whisked aloft in a fire. The after-part of the ship shook as if it would fall apart like a stack of cards. There was a great swishing sound as fire and smoke pushed up through the seams of the deck.

Twenty men were caught in a turret. A hot blast enveloped them. They felt a pressure on their ear-drums. Nauseating gas and smoke smothered them. There was confusion and danger of panic, but at one command, "Quiet," not a word was spoken. A seaman produced a torch, and they found their way through the thick smoke to the ladder. The man sent to open the hatch took a long time. The men waited quietly in the heavy smoke.

When the hatch was opened they burst out upon an amazing sight. The whole of the forward part of the ship was a mass of flames and shattered, twisted metal. Bodies lay thick on the deck. Men were running out of the fire, falling on the deck, and jumping over the side. Above, Japanese planes were flying low over the ship, strafing the fleeing seamen.

Out of the chaos the men heard a voice of calm reassurance.

"Take it easy. Don't get excited. Leave the ship for Ford Island." It was the one surviving officer. He went into the flames. Many who came out with him were so badly burnt that they were barely able to stand. They stumbled along, feeling their way, helpless, yet not one man gave way to panic.

The officer worked swiftly, surely, and took no shelter from the Japanese, who continued their strafing. Many of the wounded and some of those unhurt would have failed to get off the burning ship had it not been for this officer's courage. Men took heart from his calmness, forgot about themselves, and turned to help others escape.

"When are you leaving, sir?" someone asked him.

"Not until the Japs leave!" he answered through the flames.

When the last boat pulled away with the final load of wounded, he leaped overboard and swam ashore.

ALL OVER the harbour men were leaping from decks and portholes of burning ships, sliding down the hulls as boats capsized. But hundreds were caught in their compartments. On one ship which was turning on its side, a young chaplain was standing by a porthole, helping men through. When his turn came it was too late. "Go ahead, boys. I'm all right!" were his last words.

On another badly listing ship, many were overcome by fumes from the fuel-oil mixed with ether from the medical supply room, which had been hit. Another tremendous bomb landed. The concussion sent every loose thing on the ship flying. A boy was climbing an outside ladder at that moment. The concussion blew his body through the iron rungs, cutting it into as many pieces as the sections he covered.

On the same ship, while the universe seemed to be exploding round him, a negro mess attendant, who had never before fired a gun, manned a machine-gun on the bridge until his ammunition was exhausted.

The attackers did not get off unscathed. One destroyer had just

downed four planes when its chief radio operator got a good contact on his listening apparatus. "Submarine!" They manoeuvred for the attack and dropped two depth charges; then two more. A large oil-slick appeared and bubbles covered the sea for 200 feet.

Suddenly another contact was reported, apparently a submarine heading for a cruiser near by. The destroyer made an emergency turn and loosened another pair of depth charges; another oil-slick. They had sunk a second submarine.

Officers and men everywhere worked together and set each other inspiring examples. An ensign on one ship organized a party of volunteers to go below to the ammunition supply room, which was blocked by fire. They worked swiftly and silently, in constant danger of being blown to bits, carrying ammunition through the fire, supplying the ship's batteries. A bomb exploded and flying shrapnel mortally wounded the ensign. His men wanted to carry him above, but he ordered them to abandon him.

"It's too late to save me," he said. "Go ahead and save yourselves!" He died at his post.

All available arms were put into use. A country lad had a standard rifle shoved into his hand.

"Get out and shoot!" was the command.

The boy had not been trained to handle a heavy rifle, but he had "done lots of huntin' " in his day. He aimed at a small dive bomber coming in, and fired. One of the freak accidents of the war occurred. Apparently his bullet hit the detonator of the bomb the Japanese was about to drop, for the plane burst in mid-air. The boy fainted.

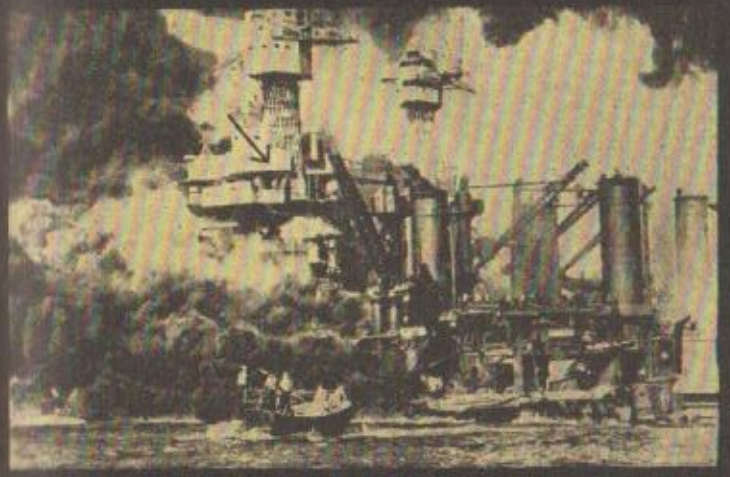
On one ship a chaplain robed in ecclesiatical gown was setting up his reader's stand for the morning service. At the attack he dashed to the door where they were dealing out arms, and grabbed a machine-gun. Using his stand for a prop, he fired away.

WE LEARNED in Honolulu that day how narrow the dividing line is between the soldier and the civilian in wartime. Soon after the bombing started, a call came in to the headquarters of the Hawaii

A new explosion, filling the sky with smoke and flame, illuminates the burnt-out and damaged aircraft littering the naval air station at Pearl Harbour

Destroyers (foreground) keep up a flak barrage against a Japanese dive-bomber (circled), attacking through the smoke of the stricken *Arizona*

The battleship *Arizona*, her back broken, keels over as she settles in the water



High in the superstructure two men (arrowed) are surrounded by the fires of the 31,800 ton *West Virginia*. Below them a small boat rescues another seaman from the water

Men scramble overboard as the battleship *California* sinks from bomb and torpedo damage. Only a small area of her sister ship *Oklahoma* still shows above the water (circled)

A capsized mine-layer lies in calm water as fires rage aboard the cruiser *Helena* (left) which was hit by an aerial torpedo. In a dry dock (arrowed) smoke pours from the destroyer *Shaw*

Medical Association. It just said, "Pearl Harbour! Ambulances! For God's sake, hurry!"

Within twenty minutes, doctors and volunteer workers had stripped the insides of over 100 delivery trucks of every description, equipped them neatly with previously prepared stretcher frames, and were speeding to the scene of action.

Women of the Motor Corps were carrying men in every available car to Pearl Harbour. The three-lane road was an inferno. Army trucks, official and unofficial emergency wagons, ambulances, Red Cross cars and hundreds of taxis rushing officers and men to their battle stations screamed up and down the six-mile road. The Motor Corps women were equal to the task.

The wounded were taken to Tripler Hospital. One bomb had made a direct hit on a mess hall while three or four hundred airmen were having breakfast. Maimed and bleeding, they poured into Tripler. Surgeon King put in an emergency call to the doctors of Honolulu: "Surgical teams, quick!"

Then occurred one of life's breath-taking coincidences. At that very moment virtually every surgeon in Honolulu was listening to a lecture on war-surgery delivered by Dr. John Moorhead of New York. The audience departed in a body for Tripler.

By another coincidence, Dr. Moorhead had been demonstrating a new surgical instrument which located metal in the body. The instrument had its baptism of fire that morning, saving many precious hours that would otherwise have been spent waiting for X-rays to be developed.

Dr. Pinkerton, making his rounds at Queen's Hospital, heard a commotion below in the emergency ward. Dozens of cars were bringing in wounded civilians, mutilated, burnt. As the doctor rushed to give instructions, a call came from Tripler Hospital.

"Blood plasma, quick!"

In five minutes Dr. Pinkerton was at the refrigeration plant of the Hawaiian Electric Company where the local blood bank was stored. There were 210 flasks of 250 cc. (half a pint) each. He left

sixty of these at Queen's emergency ward for the civilian cases and sped on to Tripler with the rest.

The call came from Pearl Harbour: "Plasma!"

The precious fluid was again divided and part hurried to the surgeons at the Harbour. It was going fast.

At eleven o'clock Dr. Pinkerton made a short appeal over the radio. In half an hour 500 people were waiting at the doors of the hospital. The staff of trained technicians worked at twelve tables but could not take the blood as fast as it was offered. Some donors stood in line for seven hours. Japanese by the hundreds registered silent protest with their blood.

Entire families came. The age limits were eighteen to fifty, but young boys lied and old men asserted their right to be included.

Many donors came back to give more. One second-class seaman was recognized.

"You shouldn't come back so soon," a nurse warned him.

"My brother was killed," he said. "I want to do something."

That's what everyone in Hawaii was saying that nightmarish day. "I want to do something."

CONVALESCENTS in the Naval Hospital were hastily evacuated to temporary quarters outside to make room for the injured, streaming in on stretchers. Numbers of young seamen had lost arms or legs, hundreds were burnt. The spirit of these boys was unbelievable. The most impressive fact about the hospital, filled with wounded, many suffering unto death, was the silence. No confusion, no crying out. You never heard screams—instead, "Watch that leg, please, ma'am. It's broken in two places."

In one hour boys had become men, and men heroes. The medical officer walked down a row of wounded to select the ones to receive immediate treatment. His trained eye at once saw the worst case. Burnt skin was dripping off a young boy's entire upper body.

"Take care of my buddy, here, Doc," the boy said. "He's hurt lots worse than I am. "

That sentence was spoken more often than any other throughout the day—"Take care of my buddy."

EACH AFTERNOON for days Pearl Harbour's 3,000 heroic dead were buried, simply and with dignity, without crowds of onlookers. On each grave was a bouquet of flowers. A row of tight-lipped khaki-clad marines, their eyes fixed on the distant hills, stepped forward, raised their rifles, and fired three volleys. A bugler sounded The Last Post. The clear notes of the bugle echoed through the quiet valley, a valley of legend and song, where happy people had lived in peace and freedom for over a hundred years.

On New Year's Day, Honolulu paid its respects to the dead in a memorial service. Hundreds of people attended, each wearing a Hawaiian flower garland in honour of the dead. They gathered round the long, wide trenches in which rows of men who had fought side by side now lay side by side, each in his own coffin. Six Hawaiian girls sang the slow, sweet strains of *Aloha Oe*.

Fleet Chaplain Macguire spoke in a firm voice:

"Let no one think they died in vain. They manned their guns until the decks buckled under them from the heat. Not a whimper. Not a moan.

"It was glorious!

"Don't say we buried our dead with sorrow. They died manfully. They were buried manfully. And we will avenge their deaths, come what may!"

Condensed from "Pearl Harbour," published by The Bodley Head, London

The Password Was MANDALAY

By Lieutenant-Colonel James Warner Bellah

SEVEN MONTHS of back-breaking, mind-searing work ended that last morning. Only hours were left—slow hours until take-off. Jerry Dunn kept talking about death and I kept shutting him up. He'd smile and say: "If you talk about it, it won't happen."

There were two open spaces on the map, open spaces ringed with jungle and mountain. Nobody had been on the ground at either place—but there were photographs. The troop-carrying gliders would start down into those places shortly; they had to be taken and held at all costs, because the gliders couldn't go back.

You would hit the ground and go into action, and behind you in wave after wave would come British troops and American engineers and bulldozers and graders and mules to build an airfield between dawn and dusk, so that the next night troop-carrying aircraft could land the army.

At our base there were voices from London and Liverpool, Brooklyn and Carolina, Texas and Nepal. But suddenly nobody seemed to have any nationality. Phil Cochran must have felt that loss of all the non-essentials of life. He closed the briefing with, "Tonight you're going to find out you've got a soul. Nothing you've ever done counts now. Only the next few hours. Good luck."

Dunn and I lay on the ground in the shade of a glider wing. We were to be first wave. Dunn talked about his wife in London. Every now and then as he talked the whole thing would surge up inside

me like a dental appointment when I was a lad. The time drew on. "See you," Dunn said and walked back to his glider.

John Alison came running over—he was a fighter pilot but on this flight he was Cochran's second-in-command with the job of making an airfield out of a jungle clearing in twelve hours. He got in; co-pilot Doc Tulloch and I climbed aboard and the detachment filed in behind us. Everyone was in full field kit and armed to the teeth with rifles, tommy guns, knives and grenades—a pirate crew, Wingate's army and Cochran's air commandos, in mottled camouflage suits, with broad-brimmed, rakish, paint-dabbed jungle hats.

There was no babbling to quieten screaming nerves, no bravado—for this was no quickly cooked-up raid. This was an army, filling the great gliders behind us—a force in heavy strength with hundreds of miles of night flying ahead of us over trackless jungle and jagged mountains—and over a formidable Japanese force.

The gliders were towed in pairs on long ropes. Seese was flying the left glider in our tow, with Brigadier "Mad Mike" Calvert and most of one of the Brigade staffs aboard. We came up over the trees fighting to get height for the mountains in our path. We settled to the long flying hours ahead—long, cramped, smokeless hours with God-knew-what at the end of them.

Soon all we could see was the blue blob of exhaust from the tug's starboard motor. All we could feel was the breathing of tightly packed men and the animal shudder of the glider as it swung into the propeller wash and out again, weaving on its long snaking tow rope. All we could hear was the thundering noise of our thrust through the air, for towed gliders are as noisy as powered planes.

We were alone as far as we could see, but we knew that the rest of the wave was behind us. Now we were at 8,500 feet and across the frontier into Burma, with the mountains behind us. If the Japanese had even one good night fighter pilot we could all be done in like sitting birds, for we were sneaking in without fighter cover and in unarmed planes—counting entirely on audacity and surprise.

The moon was bright and high over Burma. We crossed the

Irrawaddy River and passed within a few miles of a Japanese airfield. We plastered our faces to the windows watching for tracers or pursuing fighters. But they let us through that bottleneck—they must have thought us a night bombing mission.

"Target in twenty minutes." We broke from our tight-packed, cramp-locked huddles. Bolts snicked sharply as rounds of ammunition snapped into chambers. Men got their packs adjusted—heavy jungle packs that would supply us if we had to get out on foot.

Ahead, the tug banked lazily and suddenly John Alison called out, "They've got the smudges lit!" The first glider was already down, then. Half-way round in the banking turn, Alison hit the tow-release at 1,000 feet and we were gliding free. We were off—in complete darkness into a blind clearing at better than 100 miles an hour, howling down the night wind, deep in the heart of enemy territory—with little John Alison fighting the controls.

Trees—and we were over them! A long flat shadowland ahead and we levelled off, sank towards it, struck it and bounced. The skids tore into the dust and suddenly we had stopped. The doors flew open; the security party was off on the run, fanning out towards the jungle that could have burst into enemy fire.

"Gliders!"

Another tug was over us with its gliders cut off. You could see them over the distant trees, losing altitude fast, diving towards us—one of them with death reaching for it. Before it quite cleared the trees there was a splintering, crushing thunderclap echoing through the night and the glider was gone.

We started running towards the sound of the crash, passing the word back for the doctor. We cut part way into the tangled growth and called—but no answer came back. Not a sound but the roar of more motors overhead and the slicing sigh of two more gliders cut free—and again two—until the air seemed full of them.

The word was passed that buffalo wallows and a log or two had taken wheels off some of the landed gliders—all hands manhandled them and cleared the landing space. But a big glider with one

wheel off and skids dug in was a damned thing to move. Fifty men strained at the wreck but she didn't budge.

"Gliders!"

Two more were howling down over the trees towards the congestion. One saw it in time, zoomed with the last of its speed and ploughed in safety just beyond. But the other crashed head-on and welded two gliders into a ball of scrap. Screams tore the night and the wrecker crew clawed into the wreckage with bare hands to get at the injured. A doctor was already inside doing something under torchlight, after his morphine had stilled the screaming.

There was a quiet North Country voice in there, "Don't move me—this is where I landed—and this is where I die."

John Alison was rerigging the lights to give the second wave of gliders a runway to come in on that would avoid the wrecked gliders. Indefatigable John, tearing all over the place.

Brigadier Calvert had his command post set up in the jungle edge and his security patrols out. One distant shot, but no enemy as yet. Doc Tulloch's dressing station began to fill up. Men hobbled in singly or were carried in on stretchers. There was no sound from them. There seldom is after the first shocked screams.

Again the roar of aircraft filled the night skies—and again the gliders swooped in two by two. One with a bulldozer aboard missed the strip in the darkness and dived headlong between two trees taking off both wings and howling onward into the clear. The bulldozer was torn loose inside. It slammed forward unhinging the nose, heaving pilot and co-pilot into the air, ricocheting out under them and letting the two men drop back unhurt.

With the first light, the bulldozers began to growl and the sappers were at it to make an airport for powered planes—grading and filling, levelling off hummocks, cutting the rank buffalo grass, hauling disabled gliders under the trees.

A captain hobbled in on a broken foot. He had found his way in from a deep jungle crash with his sergeant—both of them dazed. Two men were alive, they said, so Doc Tulloch got the position

and with stretcher-bearers he started to make his way in to them. Late in the forenoon they came back. Alone. The captain had been too dazed to keep his directions straight.

Brigadier Calvert roughed in the casualty list, and it was amazingly small for what it had purchased. In another six hours thousands of troops would pour in to this airport that these first-wave men had died to secure.

There was the hum of light motors in the sky and over the tree-tops came a formation of tiny planes—come to take out the injured. We got one to cruise over the jungle and locate Doc's crash, and after an hour we found them. Two men had survived and we got them out. Jerry Dunn was in there with the rest—to stay. He had been wrong. When you have an appointment with death, you will keep it, whether you talk or not.

The engineers toiled on throughout the long, steaming afternoon lengthening the air-strip. These sappers—with shovels and machine-guns, and the toughest jobs in war—have the holy fires of something in their souls, something only a sapper can understand.

The sun was sinking to the tree-tops and the shadows were pooling deep across the clearing—that clearing so far in enemy territory that when you looked at it on a map you couldn't quite believe you were there. But you were. And it was no longer deep in enemy territory; it belonged to us. It was an airfield, test-lighted for the troop-carrying planes. A wrecked glider was the control tower, and John Alison was ready in it with his control radio.

There was a motor roar far up in the evening sky. The first of the troop ships. They came in and circled for Alison's landing beam and got it, roaring down to disgorge the army. They came in so fast that you lost count, and the figure was unbelievable—it still is if you look it up in the official records.

General Wingate's Army. Phil Cochran and his men flew it over the mountains in the bright moonlight and put it down deep in the heart of Japanese-held Burma—and the password was Mandalay.

Condensed from US Air Services

Secret Mission to North Africa

By Frederick Painton

IN HIS London headquarters General Dwight Eisenhower stared at the cable marked *"Most secret"* that had just been handed to him. In essence, it said this: *A group of pro-Allied Vichy French officers in Algeria, with information about Axis plans to take over the country, suggested that five officers from General Eisenhower's staff come secretly and at once to a rendezvous near Algiers to discuss the situation.*

The General reflected. The Allies had plans for their own invasion of the area; on "D-Day" at "H-Hour" (8th November 1942, at 1.00 a.m.) British and American troops would make amphibious landings in North Africa. A secret rendezvous with the French could gain information that might save many lives among the youngsters even now beginning to file aboard transports. But there was a terrible risk involved. The secret mission might be discovered, thus warning both the Vichy High Command and the Nazis of what was afoot. In that case the great operation might end in horrible disaster.

General Eisenhower turned to the man across the desk—six-foot-three Major-General Mark Wayne Clark, his Deputy Commander.

"I think you can do it, Wayne," he said quietly.

The decision made, Eisenhower and Clark went at once to 10 Downing Street. Over lunch, Winston Churchill heard the plan and welcomed it. It was an adventure after his own heart, one he might well have gloriously lived himself half a century earlier.

"Done," he said. "You'll have our fullest co-operation."

Whereupon Clark hastily departed to hand-pick the four men to go with him: Captain Jerauld Wright of the US Navy, a crack shot; Colonel Julius Holmes, who spoke French and knew Algeria; Colonel Arch Hamblen, an expert on shipping problems; and Brigadier-General Lyman Lemnitzer* of G-3, the operations branch of the US Army.

Each was instructed: "Leave your office as if you would be away no more than an hour. Take what a haversack will carry. No papers of any kind. We leave tonight."

Besides the haversacks they carried Garand-type rifles, tommy guns and a small quantity of gold—about £120—to be used in case of trouble. At 7.30 a.m., on 18th October, two big planes roared into the air. The historic mission had started.

Meanwhile, coded cables had flashed orders to a British naval base to provide a submarine and four kayaks—small boats made of wood and canvas, which would be used to put the passengers ashore. The Commandos contributed the services of three officers who were expert in this kind of business: Captains G. B. (Jumbo) Courtney and R. P. Livingston, and Lieutenant J. P. Foote.

Late in the afternoon Clark's party arrived at the base. An RN captain listened attentively as the scheme was outlined. Then he said bluntly: "It's very dangerous. We can put ashore, no trouble there. But the kayaks are cockleshells. If a sea springs up you can't launch them, can't get away."

Clark nodded. It was a risk he had considered and accepted.

The captain continued: "General, this sounds like a secret service thriller where the hero goes to a haunted farm-house that shows a light at midnight."

Clark grinned. "How the devil did you know that?" For a farm-house *was* to show a light if the coast was clear to land.

The moon was rising as the five Americans and the three British

*General Lemnitzer was appointed Supreme Commander Allied Forces Europe in 1962.

Commandos, led by the submarine's commander, Lieutenant N. L. A. Jewell, boarded a little 750-ton submarine. With them they took blue signalling lamps—which would not throw beams observable from the side—to signal in Morse code after they landed, and a small "walkie-talkie" set which they could use to communicate with the submarine, secure in the knowledge that the Germans could not pick up what was said. The diesels rumbled and the submarine got under way.

AT 4 a.m. on the second night they sighted the rendezvous signal light on the African shore. But it was too close to dawn to risk a landing. They submerged again to wait for evening. Through the periscope Clark could see the old Moorish-type farm-house, perched on the edge of an abrupt slope. Behind the farm-house was the main road to Algiers. They could see no sign of life anywhere.

Colonel Holmes studied the scene with mixed emotions. "The last time I saw that road," he remarked, "was when my wife and I drove along it on our honeymoon."

For fifteen hours the tiny submarine remained below the surface. The air became so foul that a struck match would not ignite. The men found themselves gasping and gulping. Their heads pounded; the slightest exertion brought utter fatigue. But when night fell at last, the submarine surfaced. The men climbed to the conning tower, the night air clearing their heads, and waited for the signal light to gleam again.

Eight o'clock came, then nine o'clock. The farm-house remained dark. A great many praying words were used in an unprayerful way. Would they have to take twenty-four hours more of this mechanized sewer pipe? Lemnitzer groaned. "Something's happened. There'll be no light."

At 11.10 he was proved wrong; the light came on.

The crew got the kayaks through the torpedo hatch and launched them. Keeping close together, the party headed for shore through surf that drenched them with chill spray. Some 500 yards from the beach they stopped. Suppose the Vichy-controlled police had been

warned and were lurking in the bushes ashore? Were they about to walk into a trap? Somebody had to go first and make sure.

Julius Holmes spoke French the best, and knew some of the people ashore, so he and Commando Captain Livingston headed in. If all was clear, the others would follow. Ten minutes later Holmes's boat grated on the gravel. Rifles ready, the two men got out and moved cautiously along the beach.

Suddenly they heard someone moving in the brush. They whirled, guns levelled. A voice said in English, "Who's there?"

"Who're you?" asked Holmes.

"I'm Ridgeway Knight."

Ridgeway Knight was an American vice-consul who had taken part in the arrangements for the rendezvous.

"I'm Julius Holmes. Where's Bob Murphy?"

(Murphy, the American Consul-General in North Africa, had been instrumental in bringing about the meeting.)

"He'll be along in a minute. Everything's OK."

Holmes turned to Livingston. "Make the signal."

Livingston blinked his blue lamp seaward. The signals were, "K" for "korrect" if all was well; "F" for "foney" if there was trouble. He made the "K" signal in Morse, and presently the other kayaks came out of the night and the other six men stepped ashore. Then the signal "All's well" was made to the submarine, and its diesel drone died away as it stood off-shore.

To hide the boats, the wet shivering men hauled them up to the farm-house and piled them in the kitchen. They then peeled off their clothes, spread them out to dry, and after a meal, dozed until the French party arrived at seven o'clock and the conference began.

The information obtained was priceless. It included the tonnage capacity of the ports of Casablanca, Algiers, Oran and Tunis; the French Navy's plans for preventing a landing; a list of the places where French Army resistance would be tough, and where it would be only token. Special information on airport runways later proved to be of inestimable value.

The sun climbed the sky and started down, and still the men talked, and calculated, and marked the maps.

But General Clark's luck was running out at last. Jerry Wright heard a sound that quickly brought him out of the house. The wind was whistling round the house's red-tiled roof. Waves as tall as a man were roaring against the shore. Wright knew that no kayak could ever be launched in that sea. He went gloomily back inside.

Meanwhile, two Arab servants, who had that morning been dismissed by the owner of the farm-house for safety's sake, had gone to a near-by town and visited the Commissioner of Police. They reported that they had seen strange men carry big bundles (the boats) to the farm-house. The place had once been a smuggler's hideout; perhaps it was being thus used again. So a police car was soon humming along the road towards the rendezvous. . . .

THE SUN dropped into the sea and lights behind the shaded farm-house windows lit up the conference room. The discussions had about reached an end. Only one point remained.

One of the French officers said, "It will be necessary to have some leader here whom we will all follow. I suggest General Henri Honoré Giraud."

"But he's in France," objected Clark, "practically a prisoner."

"He must be rescued and brought here. He is the only officer who can gain the loyalty of the many conflicting factions."

Clark agreed, and promised that Giraud should be rescued and brought to North Africa.*

Then, in the next room, the telephone jangled. The men jerked erect, looked at each other. The house owner answered the call, and a moment later came rushing into the conference room, his eyes wide with fright. "The police! They'll be here in five minutes!"

Most of the French officers—the top ones—hurried out. To be discovered here in these circumstances meant being shot for treason. Engines roared, gears clashed, and they were gone.

* See "Giraud's Brilliant Escape from a Nazi Prison," p. 125

Clark's men hastily stuffed maps and papers inside their shirts. They were trapped between the Vichy police and the stormy sea. And now the police car roared up, its lights gleaming against the white walls of the farm-house. Where could they hide?

Clark was all for taking literally to the woods. Murphy objected; if the police got suspicious and made a search, the Americans were bound to be discovered. "There's an empty wine cellar," said Murphy. "You go down there. I'll get rid of the police."

Clark didn't like it: a cellar seemed like a rat-trap—no room to manoeuvre. But there was now no time for anything else. They could hear the gendarmes piling out of their car. Gripping rifles and tommy guns, the eight officers filed down into the wine cellar. Murphy pulled the doors down flat, put boxes over them, then turned to meet the police.

He had one stratagem that might work. The conference table was littered with half-empty wine bottles and cigarette stubs. Two French lieutenants in civilian clothes took their lives in their hands by pretending to be having a drunken party with Murphy and Knight. They began singing snatches of drinking songs; laughing and talking loudly. That was the scene the Commissioner of Police walked in upon a moment later.

Down in the cellar—it was only ten feet square—Clark disposed his party behind the stairs and along the walls so that casual observation from above might not discover them. But if the police did come down to take a look, then what? General Clark's whispered orders were blunt: his men were to shoot to kill. Upstairs the situation rapidly worsened. They could hear Bob Murphy arguing with the Commissioner. He and a few friends, Murphy protested, were having a little party. Since when was that a crime? But the voices were coming closer, until they seemed at the very cellar door.

And now the tense silence in the cellar was broken by choking gasps. Jumbo Courtney was trying to suppress a fit of coughing. The strangling sounds seemed to his companions loud enough to be heard in Algiers. Jumbo struggled desperately.

"By George!" he gasped. "I'm afraid I'll choke."

"I'm afraid you won't!" said Clark, grimly. "But chew this."

Jumbo fumbled for the gum, chewed desperately. The spasm passed. Silence settled on the cellar. The men could hear their own hearts thudding.

Above, Murphy was still arguing vociferously. Snatches of drunken song came from the gallant French lieutenants. A minute took a century to pass.

And then the voices upstairs changed tone. The Commissioner of Police was not so brusque. Holmes heaved a sigh. "Bob's got him," he whispered.

The Commissioner had decided there was no smuggling going on. Nevertheless, he said, he'd have to report to his superior. And, yes, without a doubt his superior would return to look into the matter further.

Just then Jumbo started to have another spasm of coughing.

"Chew that gum," Clark whispered tensely.

"I am, sir, but all the sweetness has gone out of it."

"I don't wonder," whispered Clark. "I chewed it for an hour before I gave it to you." This was considered very funny—later.

At last, however, the footsteps faded away, and they heard the police car leave. Clark and his party ascended, anxious to get to the submarine quickly. But the surf still pounded on the beach. Jerry Wright said, "I'd hate to have to launch a whaleboat in that sea."

Yet the mission was now a success—if they could only get away with the information. Clark said: "We'll try it."

A radio message was sent to the submarine: "Stand in as close as possible. We're in trouble and will embark immediately."

They carried the kayaks down to the wind-swept beach. It took a bold man even to consider going into that roaring sea with a fragile craft hardly bigger than a child's toy-boat. Clark stripped to his underclothes and, carrying his outer garments, walked out into the breakers with Livingston. They managed to get into the heaving little boat, and drove their paddles deep. Then a huge wall of water

broke over them, the kayak up-ended, and Clark and Livingston vanished into a white fury of foam.

A moment later, battered, turned end-over-end by the undertow, they came rolling along the beach, full of sand, salt water and artistic profanity. The others retrieved the kayak, but the paddles and the General's clothing were being swirled away.

Somebody yelled, "Get his trousers!"

Wright shouted, "To hell with his trousers. Get those paddles!"

They got the paddles.

Even Clark was forced to admit that they couldn't launch a boat that night. And he realized that they might be stranded here for days if the wind continued. But he refused to return to the cellar, police or no police. They would take to the woods where a man had a chance to shoot his way out.

So they hid themselves and the kayaks among the palms, shivering men in underwear, bitterly cold. The next day High Command officers did sentry-duty in their underpants. The wind continued unabated, preventing escape.

The police returned at eleven o'clock that night. The group in the woods, guns ready, hid tightly. Murphy greeted the police again, smiling his charming smile, talking rapidly and smoothly. In the end the police did not search the woods. They were not satisfied; they said they would return in the morning; but for the moment they were staved off.

BY 4 A.M. the wind seemed to have lessened somewhat, though the seas were still mountainous.

"We'll try it again," said Clark. His radio message to the submarine this time was imperative: "Stand in as close as possible."

Jumbo, Knight and the two French lieutenants steadied the first kayak. Clark and Wright climbed in. Cautiously the four walked the frail craft out into the pounding surf until Wright saw a comparatively smooth stretch. "Now!" he yelled.

The four men heaved the boat forward, Clark and Wright

paddled with all their strength. The light kayak climbed the side of an oncoming wave, hung for an endless space almost perpendicular —then suddenly went over the hooked crest and cleared the surf.

Captain Wright, steering for the submarine, swore hoarsely. "By God, thirty years in the navy and what happens? I wind up in command of a kayak!"

Meanwhile the others were trying to float their boats. General Lemnitzer and Lieutenant Foote used the same four-man system of launching, but their kayak capsized almost at once. Men and boat were hauled ashore. They tried again, and this time got clear.

Holmes and Livingston got off without accident, but Arch Hamblen and Jumbo Courtney overturned on their first attempt. They were the last to reach the submarine, and just as they did so a gigantic wave caught their kayak, lifted it high and swept it down upon the submarine. Crew members snatched the men clear and held them while the water poured in a torrent off the submarine's back. The wave broke the kayak in two and swept it away.

The danger was instantly apparent. A broken boat ashore with its contents scattered along the beach—it had contained letters, uniforms and a haversack holding the gold—would be a complete betrayal of the visitors' presence. They flashed Murphy a warning to clear the beach of all debris.

Murphy, Knight and the two French lieutenants searched the beach early in the morning and destroyed the debris.

The submarine turned her bow north at a painful four knots. Clark, anxious to get his information to London as soon as possible, decided to risk breaking radio silence. He sent a message to the nearest British base, giving his course, speed and position, and asking that a plane be sent out.

At 3.20 p.m. a Catalina flying-boat droned low overhead. An hour and a half later Clarke and his men landed at the base and flashed the news of the great success. Then they boarded planes for Britain—with information that was to save thousands of British and American lives.

Vemork, Norway: 1942

Eleven Against the Nazi A-Bomb

By Frederic Sondern

ONE MORNING in February 1944, the heavily laden railway ferry *Hydro* was plunging through the choppy waves of Lake Tunnsjö in Norway. Suddenly—the dull boom of an explosion below-decks. The ship lurched and shuddered to a stop. Five minutes later the *Hydro* had sunk, and with it Hitler's dream of possessing the first atom bomb. Behind that explosion lies the story of one of the war's most fantastic undercover operations.

As far back as April 1940, the international scientists' bush telegraph—notoriously indiscreet and uncontrollable—had indicated that the Kaiser Wilhelm Institut was conducting extensive experiments towards splitting the atom. Then, just as America's project was being set up in 1942, the Intelligence Section of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare came through with electrifying information: the Germans had ordered the Norwegian electrochemical plant, Norsk Hydro, largest of its kind in the world, to increase its production of deuterium oxide (heavy water) from 3,000 to 10,000 pounds a year. That could mean only one appalling thing. Allied physicists had discovered that heavy water was an ideal moderator to use in the preparation of Uranium 235. Since the Allies did not possess sufficient heavy water, and since its refinement took a year and a half, graphite was finally and successfully used for the process. But the intelligence report confirmed that the Kaiser Wilhelm Institut was well along with its experiments.

The problem of paralysing Norsk Hydro and destroying its stocks of heavy water was given highest priority by Churchill's War Cabinet. The Air Staff reported that a bombing attack on this pin-point objective, ringed by vicious mountains, was not practicable with the planes then available. It was a Commando job.

Some time earlier, a group of Norwegian resistance men had seized the coastal steamer *Galtesund* and sailed her through the mine and submarine perils of the North Sea into Aberdeen. One of them was a hydro-electrical specialist who had already organized a highly effective section of the Norwegian underground.

Einar (as he was known for security reasons) was immediately summoned to Special Forces headquarters in London. The intelligent, powerfully built engineer was a master on skis and an excellent shot—important qualifications for the job ahead. He had an unshakeable calm; there was a quality of determination in every gesture. Still better, he had lived within a few miles of the Norsk Hydro plant almost all his life and had a brother and friends in important positions there.

At Special Forces headquarters Einar met Dr. Leif Tronstad, who had been designing engineer of Norsk Hydro's heavy-water plant. It was Dr. Tronstad who had developed the large-scale production of deuterium oxide and, as a pre-war personal friend of a great number of German nuclear physicists, had more exact information about Germany's atomic bomb progress than any non-German alive. Late in 1941 Tronstad had been smuggled into Sweden by the Norwegian underground, and flown to London.

After a talk with Tronstad, Einar was asked, "Do you think that Norsk Hydro can be put out of commission by sabotage?" He explained the situation with Scandinavian deliberation. The plant was a seven-story, massively constructed, steel and concrete building. It and the equally solid hydro-electric power works near by were perched on the brink of a 1,000-foot gorge. All approaches, and the plant itself, were guarded by picked German troops. The mountains round it were almost impassable. It would

be a very difficult task indeed. "But," he added, "we would certainly like to have a go at it."

Einar was whisked off to the Special Forces training centre. Being an amateur wireless operator, he quickly learned to operate a powerful short-wave receiver-transmitter which fitted into a small suit-case. He was taught the necessary codes, made his parachute training jumps, and was given his final orders. He was to return to Norway immediately, gather every available scrap of information about Norsk Hydro, send it to London, and await the arrival of a reinforcing group.

On a moonlit night Einar plummeted out of an R.A.F. bomber into the mountains twenty miles from his home. He picked himself up—"with a queer feeling in the stomach," as he put it—and skied home. He had breakfast with his mother before daybreak. "I just told my family that I'd been away on a ski-ing trip. I had some nasty doubts for a few days; but evidently no one knew I had been in on the *Galtesund* affair."

Through his brother, Einar secured a job with Norsk Hydro on the construction of a new dam being built to increase the heavy-water output. With infinite care he organized his most trusted friends into a reliable service which brought him every item of news about the factory. This information was then quickly sent on to British central intelligence.

Production of deuterium oxide was increasing rapidly, Einar reported; stocks of it were being shipped monthly to Germany. The War Cabinet ordered Combined Operations to prepare a Commando assault on Norsk Hydro at once.

Combined Operations, with all their experience in suicidal exploits, faced one of their toughest jobs. Craggy mountains, over which violent air currents roar unpredictably, make Norway the worst country in Europe for parachute or glider attacks. But with the help of Dr. Tronstad, who directed the construction of exact models of the target and its inner works, and Einar's precise reports, Operation Swallow was finally organized.

Four picked Norwegians, all expert skiers and natives of the area, were to be dropped first to reinforce Einar and form a reception committee for a later Commando assault by British airborne troops. Twice a bomber took the Swallows over Norway, ready to jump, only to be forced back by impenetrable cloud. Finally, on an evening in October 1942, they were bundled into their plane at a few minutes notice and several hours later jumped into the night. Next morning, they found they were on a rugged mountainside more than 100 miles from their operation area. It took them two days to find their equipment in the scattered parachuted containers.

During the next fifteen days, the Swallows made one of the classic treks of the war. At 4,000 feet altitude, in constantly sub-zero weather, a sixty-pound pack was the maximum that one man could carry. That meant that each day each Swallow had to shuttle three times over the same route to move his 120-pound load. The daily ration of each man was a small slab of cheese, a handful of groats, a handful of flour and four biscuits.

At last, on 9th November, the anxious officers of Combined Operations heard the long-awaited Swallow code signal. They were in position near Norsk Hydro, had made contact with Einar and were ready to guide in the glider-borne sabotage party by radio and landing lights.

On 19th November two Halifax bombers, each towing a glider full of airborne troops, took off from Britain. A few hours later an agent in Norway radioed that bombers and tows had crashed and that all personnel had been killed or captured.

Worse news was to follow. A German military intelligence officer, searching the plane wreckage, had found a map with a red line drawn through Vemork, the town where the heavy-water plant was located. The German Reichskommissar for Norway, Josef Terboven, and Commanding General von Falkenhorst rushed to Vemork to inspect its defences. SS troops combed the neighbourhood and arrested everyone suspected of pro-British sentiments. But they did not find any of the Swallows.

In London, desperate Combined Operations started all over again. The idea of a glider attack was given up. Six Special Force Norwegians would be dropped by parachute. Dr. Tronstad went to work training them with maps and models. Time was growing short. The Swallows, with little food and the batteries of their radios running down, were hanging on under frightful conditions in their 4,000-foot mountain eyrie. They were living in a tiny snow-covered hut—"Everybody except myself," the Swallow leader reported, "sick of fever and pains in the stomach." They were forced to eat reindeer moss. Einar, a few miles away, was running a close race with the Gestapo; but every few days he would leave his tiny camouflaged hut in the snow, ski down at dusk and meet his trusted informants around Vemork.

Soon Einar radioed the almost unbelievable information that the Germans, for some reason, believed that the Commandos had not been after the Norsk Hydro plant itself, but the new dam being built near by. One hundred new guards had been put on the dam; only twelve were assigned to the factory.

By late December, Operation Gunnerside was ready to go. The six Norsemen dropped one evening on the snow-covered ice of Lake Skryken, thirty miles north of the Swallow hide-out. They had barely started their march when the most savage snowstorm for years obscured the countryside. For five desperate days the Norwegians froze and starved in an abandoned hunting lodge. At last the storm blew itself out, and the exhausted men pushed on. Approaching their rendezvous, they suddenly noticed two skiers in the distance. Nerve-racking minutes followed; any clash with a German patrol would be disastrous. One of the Gunnerside men put on a camouflage ski-smock over his uniform and a civilian ski-cap, and went to meet the strangers. If they were Germans he was to pretend to be a reindeer warden on his rounds. The rest got down in the snow, their hands on their guns. But then, above the noise of the wind, three wild yells of pleasure signalled the meeting of "Gunnerside" and "Swallow."

After that, events moved quickly. At the Swallows' hiding place, the Norwegians—there were now eleven of them—put their heads together. Einar supplied the latest details on the positions of the guards and the times of their changing, which gates were locked and how. The attackers would have to descend several snow-covered miles of steeply sloping forest, clamber down into a 1,000-foot gorge, cross a raging torrent, and scale another 1,000-foot, almost sheer wall of rock to reach a railway embankment which led to the factory. At the slightest alarm the whole area would be automatically floodlighted.

At eight o'clock on 27th February nine men started out. Loaded as they were with sensitive demolition charges, their floundering descent through the treacherous snow to the bottom of the gorge was a nightmare. A sudden thaw had filled the mountain stream with careering ice floes and charging water. After a feverish search, they finally found a small ice bridge, partly inundated but still passable. Then began the terrible climb up the rock face. Ronnie, the party's leader, kept looking at his wrist watch; the precise time-table allowed for little delay. Inching their way up 1,000 feet of almost perpendicular cliff, the Norwegians all knew that one slip would spell oblivion.

On top at last, after herculean effort, they crept forward, gasping, along the railway embankment to within 500 feet of the factory. They could hear the hum of its machinery. Ronnie, in a final whispered conference, made sure that everyone knew exactly what to do. "It's time," he said finally. One of the men, armed with powerful shears, went first—to the factory gate which had been chosen because it was secured with only a chain and padlock. Then came the sharp snap of cracking steel. The others froze in their tracks. But there were no sounds from within. Quickly, they filed through the open gate. A group of five, their tommy guns ready, quietly took position round the barracks in which the twelve German guards were quartered. If the alarm sounded, they were to shoot down the soldiers as they streamed out.

So well had Dr. Tronstad done his work that it took the demolition squad of four, led by Ronnie, only a few minutes to find the cable tunnel which led directly into a room adjoining the high concentration section. Two of Ronnie's men lost him in the darkness. But he and one other began to crawl through the maze of conduits.

The guard on duty in the all-important chamber suddenly looked up into the muzzles of two pistols and reached for the ceiling—silently. "He seemed frightened," the sober Norwegians' report recorded, "but otherwise was quiet and obedient." Quickly, Ronnie made the rounds of the tanks, pipes and machinery, and fastened his charges—as he had been taught to do on their replicas in Britain—where the explosive would do the most damage. Then—a clatter of glass. Someone had kicked in a basement window. Ronnie almost began shooting, but recognized in the nick of time that it was one of his strayed assistants clambering through the window. With shaking hands he finished his job.

Still the wail of the alarm siren, which he had been fearing from moment to moment, had not sounded. He checked the thirty-second fuses and lit them. He told the guard, a Norwegian, to run for it. Twenty yards outside the cellar door they heard the explosion, dull behind the massive concrete walls but shaking the ground under them.

By the time the siren began to shriek and the sleepy Germans, feverishly strapping on their cartridge belts, came pouring out, Ronnie and his men had vanished by the same perilous and—to the Germans—incredible route by which they had come. Meanwhile, 1,000 pounds of the priceless deuterium oxide had gushed from broken tanks on to the floor and into the factory's sewers.

Within a few hours General von Falkenhorst, the German commander, roared into Vemork. Surveying the damage he exclaimed, "This is the best damned *coup* I have ever seen." Then the General erupted orders. A whole division of the Wehrmacht, 12,000 strong, converged on the area. Ski patrols and slow-flying reconnaissance planes combed the mountains. All roads and trails were blocked,

while Gestapo and SS men made a house-to-house search. But of the raiders there was no trace.

Five of the six Gunnerside men had started immediately for the Swedish border on skis, and, after incredible hardships, made it safely and were flown back to Britain. The sixth, Bonzo, and the four Swallows stayed behind to take care of some other underground work, playing tag on skis with Falkenhorst's patrols. Einar retired to his cave-like lair, to report the sequel of the demolition and continue the watch on Norsk Hydro.

Late in 1943, Einar radioed that the damage had been repaired and the plant was resuming production. Almost immediately Allied bombers knocked out the factory's power station. Then the Germans decided to move all Norsk Hydro's heavy-water equipment and stocks to an underground site in the Reich. Einar requested permission to sink the ferryboat *Hydro*, which was to carry goods wagons with these remaining stocks across Lake Tunnsjö on a certain day. Permission came speedily, and Einar instructed Bonzo, who was working with a Norwegian underground detachment some fifty miles away, to join him. With forged papers Bonzo, masquerading as a Norsk Hydro employee, made an exploratory crossing on the *Hydro* to decide how she should be sunk so as to make salvage impossible. Just before she sailed, time charges were placed in her forepeak bilges.

A few days later, the last of Germany's deuterium oxide was under the waters of Lake Tunnsjö. In desperate need of something that could be developed and used against the Allies quickly, Hitler and Goering turned to other weapons, and German experiments in atomic energy were slowed to a standstill. To eleven gallant Norwegians the Allies owed a very real debt of gratitude.

Condensed from The Minneapolis Tribune

Eye-witness report from the English Channel: 1941

A Day of Sweeping Mines off Dover

By William L. White

"A FINE doggie!" says the captain, taking the dachshund into his arms. "Her name is Bombproof Bella. She's made every trip since I was given command of the *Stella Orion*. Been dived-bombed, machine-gunned, blown about by mines. Just loves 'em. Gives tongue like a foxhound when we explode one."

We are standing on the bridge of a fishing boat, now a minesweeping trawler in the Royal Navy. The bridge is really the roof of the wheelhouse, enclosed by an armoured steel railing. On the port and starboard sides are anti-aircraft machine-guns. At bow and stern are platforms mounting four-inch guns.

Turning to the captain, I said: "I suppose you duck behind the railing when you're dive-bombed."

"Complete waste of time. You never know where a bomb is going to strike a ship and wouldn't know where to crouch. Might as well stand up and watch the fun."

The trawler is under way now, leading three other trawlers. Above the Channel the air is any man's sky, for the blue is combed into great swirls of white by constant air battles. Up there we see the misty spoor of a squadron of Messerschmitts.

We also see the exact point where a few minutes ago half a dozen Hurricanes dived into the squadron, breaking the even parallel line-up into a dozen wavering spirals. The battle is still going on. At that great height it all seems infinitely slow—very hard to realize that

the microscopic planes are doing more than 300 miles an hour.

The waters beneath this battleground are equally any man's ocean. The British control the surface by day. But at night the German minelayers sow death in the shipping lanes.

The first officer points to the French coast. "Might let us know if you notice any flashes coming from over there. A German battery fired more than 100 shells at us last Wednesday. Probably mistook us for a convoy, because they seldom bother with trawlers."

"How many ships did they hit?"

"They've never hit a ship yet although one shell landed in our wake, not twenty yards astern."

"What do you do when you see a flash?"

"Glance at your watch so you'll know when it's time to duck behind the railing. You see, the battery is twenty miles away. To get a shell that distance takes one minute and twenty seconds after you see the flash—time to light a cigarette before taking shelter."

OUR TRAWLING tackle is about 200 yards of steel cable unreeled over one side of the boat. At its end is a hollow floating tin fish slightly longer than a man. Suspended vertically under this is a thin steel plate, called a door because it is shaped like one.

This door is an underwater kite, also attached to the cable, kept about twelve feet below the surface by the floating tin fish. As we steam ahead this apparatus moves out from the side of the ship until the cable is stretched tautly at a 45° angle with the ship's wake.

The cable, woven of special steel, acts as an underwater saw—a cutting blade 200 yards long. It moves under the mines, cutting quickly through their anchor cables. The mines then bob to the surface where they can be destroyed.

We are the leading ship in our flotilla. Behind our float comes the second ship—its course is just inside the wake of our tin fish, so the ship itself is travelling in water which we have just swept; the trawl from this second ship extends another 200 yards into dangerous water; the third and fourth ships are in similar positions.

Suddenly the bridge shivers. Bombproof Bella opens her long brown muzzle to scream with joy. Half-way between us and our bobbing tin fish, a short, thin column of water rises into the air.

"Damn!" says the first officer. "Stop engines!"

Our tin fish is dropping rapidly astern, its cable broken.

"That was an explosive cutter," says the first officer. "A filthy little tiny mine moored to touch our cutting cable when we are trawling for big ones. Now we have to stop and sling out a new gear.

"One of us will probably strike a huge mine soon. When the Germans lay a big one, they usually protect it with explosive cutters."

I marvel at the accuracy with which these men can sweep a given area of trackless sea. First they divide the Channel into tracts on a chart. Then each mine-sweeper locates the boundaries of his tract by constantly taking careful bearings. An error might leave unswept a minefield which would destroy a precious cargo ship.

These men insist that their job is not very dangerous because if properly handled a mine-sweeper need almost never go into unswept water. It sails over water swept the previous day. The cable and float project out into the danger area. But any mistake in navigation or failure to allow for drift of wind and tide brings great danger.

"AIRCRAFT off the starboard bow, sir!" calls the look-out. We rake the sky with our glasses and spot a black dot, high up.

"It's the German spotter plane," the first officer says. "Comes out every afternoon. If there's a convoy moving through, it sends the position by wireless to the long-range batteries around Calais. Now and then it dives down to machine-gun us just for pure devilry."

The plane starts a big circle round us. "We had better look sharp —she may go into a dive," says the captain. The plane completes a second circle, straightens out and flies towards the English coast.

Just then the ship quivers like a plucked fiddle string, whereupon Bombproof Bella gives tongue in hysterical delight. About 100 yards out from the side of the second trawler is another slim ghostly column of water—higher than the trawler's masts.

"Jolly close!" says the first officer excitedly. "Twenty yards nearer and it might have stove her in and tossed the chaps on the bridge into the water. She must have had her cutting cable too near the surface so that it tangled in the mine's prongs."

"How many types of mine are there?" I ask.

"Can't tell you. The Germans would like to know which we can render harmless so they can abandon them for new models."

"Are the Germans so ingenious?"

"Occasionally. More often Jerry is a creature of habit. Perhaps you've heard of Monday, Wednesday and Friday? It's a classic in all trawlers. Supposed to have happened on the Thames estuary. It seems this Jerry mine-layer came out regularly every Monday, Wednesday and Friday night to lay exactly the same number of mines in exactly the same places. So regularly every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday our chaps would sweep them up. Went on for weeks, until finally our chaps decided to skip a day to see what would happen. Just as they thought, the mine-layer came out on Wednesday night and blew himself to bits on one of the mines he had laid on Monday. Our chaps went out and pulled in a dozen Germans including the captain. He was furious. Very bitter at us for neglecting our duty and not sweeping up the field. Said such sloppiness would never be tolerated in the German Navy."

"HOSTILE AIRCRAFT off the port beam!" calls the look-out.

"It's the German spotter coming back," says the first officer. "Seems to be heading for us."

The gun crews are standing round their guns, looking up. I find I am unconsciously measuring my distance from the steel railing.

"She's starting to dive, sir," shouts the first officer. Pivoting on one wing, she comes straight down at us—the sun glinting on her black cowling like an angry eye. I move towards the steel railing.

The captain says, "Better give her the first round now."

The shouted command rings out, the ship shakes with the report, and a round black cloud appears midway between us and the plane.

As suddenly as it dived, the plane veers off. It swerves, twists into a climb and circles out of range.

A sailor climbs to the bridge with a folded paper. "Signal from Number Three ship," the captain reads. "They've surfaced a mine. We're at the end of our run so you can watch them sink it."

Suddenly I see about a mile ahead what apparently is a waterspout, 100 feet tall, shaped like a snow-covered spruce.

"By Jove," says the first officer, "they're shelling us! That spotting plane has sent our position to the long-range batteries."

We watch two more huge waterspouts rise, slowly fade into mist and silently dissolve, as we complete the big turn which points us back towards Dover. But Number Three ship stays motionless until the *Stella Orion* comes alongside, when we can hear the zip of rifle bullets fired by an officer from her bridge—each one flicking a feather of spray from a wave. Among these bobs the shiny black round mine. The range seems quite long to me.

The first officer explains: "You see, now and then the bullet, instead of puncturing and sinking the mine, explodes it. I've seen a big mine open the seams of a trawler at 100 yards. At fifty it might chuck the chaps off into the water."

When the mine is sunk our flotilla reel in their tackle, and follow the white cliffs back towards Dover. The misty trails of an air battle going on above us thicken into huge ropes of fleece, the snarls fused into a cloud bank blood-red in the setting sun.

"You know, I'd like to come out again," I say.

"Afraid you'll find it the same old grind," says the captain. "Minesweeping is only exciting in the newspapers."

PERHAPS. Only three days later I see in an evening paper an item which chronicles the sinking in action of HMS trawler *Stella Orion*, and the rescue of all her crew. And I am sure that as her big blue-eyed captain was pulled grunting into the lifeboat, the reproachfully forgiving black eyes of unsinkable little Bombproof Bella were peeping out of his life jacket, just under his chin.

The Hunt for a Spy

By Carl Wall

THIS is a spy story minus false whiskers, cloak and dagger. There is no beautiful Mata Hari. No desperate cliff-edge struggle. Not a shot is fired. And yet this case is one of the most intriguing in the annals of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is the hunt for an unknown man lost in the swirling tides of New York City's millions of inhabitants.

On the night of 20th February 1942, an alert postal censor, scanning mail destined for Portugal, plucked a typewritten sheet from an airmail envelope. It was apparently harmless—the sort of letter one old friend writes another. But the address was one of those listed by counter-espionage agents abroad as an accommodation address for German agents.

Hours later, in the Washington laboratories of the FBI, a chemist stroked the blank side of the paper with a chemically saturated sponge. From the empty whiteness, the secret writing slowly appeared, twisting in the curious hieroglyphics of German hand-printing. The message conveyed information on troop ships and freighters making up for convoy in the Port of New York. In enemy hands it would threaten the lives of soldiers and seamen and tons of valuable shipping.

The spy must be captured. But the laboratory yielded only one thin clue. The letter had been typed on an Underwood three-bank portable machine. Special agents began an almost hopeless

check on all typewriter sales and rentals in the New York area.

Soon there were two more letters, both mailed from New York post offices. Did this mean that the spy lived in New York? And what did he look like? Usually when police are hunting a criminal they have some description to go by. Here the FBI had nothing.

One night a special agent, mulling over photostatic copies of the original letters, was struck by the fact that certain passages of the typed section had a curious aura of truth. Most of it, he knew, was sheer invention; but about the inconsequential trivia of everyday life the spy might well be truthful. With surging excitement, the special agent jotted down these things which seemed to be true:

X is married. He owns his home. He has a dog which has been ill with distemper. He has a regular job. He leaves his home between seven and eight o'clock every weekday morning. He recently had his glasses changed. He is an air raid warden.

There were 98,338 air raid wardens in Greater New York.

"That's a heck of a lot of air raid wardens," grinned the agent-in-charge when he heard about the idea. "But it's better than eight million. We've at least got a toenail hold."

With grim tenacity the FBI began the heroic task of checking every one of those wardens. How many are married? How many own homes? How many own dogs? Which wear spectacles?

As more letters were intercepted, the image of X took shape. These items went on to the list: He has a garden. His home is threatened by mortgage foreclosure. He wants to own a chicken farm.

The shadow of the invisible spy was still indefinite but it could no longer be cast by millions. Hard-working FBI agents, day by day, night by night, cut the figure: 98,000 . . . 88,000 . . . 81,000. But even 81,000 is a lot of people.

On the night of 14th April, the twelfth letter was intercepted. From it the investigators plucked this apparently innocent, nostalgic passage: "It is very warm here and the trees are beginning to bud. The spring always reminds me of that wonderful week we spent on the beach at Estoril. . . ."

ESTORIL! The FBI knew Estoril. A resort a few miles outside Lisbon, it was a clearing-house for German espionage agents.

There was a hurried conference. What was the best way to check everyone entering the United States from Lisbon since the spring of 1941? There was no photograph to compare with passport photographs. No fingerprints. No name. Then one of the agents clicked:

"We have a fairly good specimen of X's handwriting—the signature on the letters—Fred Lewis. The name is phoney but the handwriting isn't, because it's almost as hard to disguise your handwriting as it is to change your fingerprints."

"Every person entering the United States," he went on, "must fill in a baggage declaration for customs. Why couldn't our boys go through the file at the US Customs Office in New York and compare the handwriting on the declarations with this signature."

Next morning, FBI handwriting experts, armed with photographic copies of the hunted spy's handwriting, began working their way through thousands upon thousands of customs declarations. The spring of 1941 had been the high tide of the refugee flood from Lisbon. The handwriting on baggage declarations was a weird assortment: Polish, German, French, Dutch, Russian.

The work of the handwriting expert is an exact science. Clues hang on the slightest twist of an E or the looping of an L. Each of the forms had to be examined with meticulous care. For days the experts burrowed their way through the mountainous stacks.

And this was only one phase of the great manhunt, now in full swing. Every scrap of information that had been sweated from those twelve letters was being checked and double-checked. Of the 98,000 air raid wardens, nearly 60,000 had been eliminated. FBI agents get their answers by asking questions, waiting, humouring silent ones and enduring talkative ear benders. Every phase of the investigation consumed precious time.

At nine o'clock on the night of 9th June 1943, a special agent picked one more form from the stacks in the New York Customs Office, the 4,881st that had been examined. Suddenly, as his eyes

focused on the signature at the bottom of the sheet, his weariness vanished. He reached for his magnifying-glass. Yes. He was sure of it. There was the same looping E. The same slanting F. The identical sloping S. The expert startled his colleagues with a bellow.

That night in the Washington laboratory, the signature was photographed, the prints enlarged and compared with the spy letters. The experts were sure now. At 1.45 a.m. the telephone rang in the FBI's office: "Check the name Ernest F. Lehmitz."

The list of air-raid wardens was consulted. On it was the name Lehmitz—123 Oxford Place, Tompkinsville, Staten Island, N.Y.

Less than an hour later special agents strode down the gangplank of the ferry from Manhattan to Staten Island. A blustering show of guns? A duel in the dawn? Nothing quite so simple. There were other questions to be answered. Are there accomplices? Where and how is the spy getting his information? Spies seldom talk after they are arrested. And another factor: spies get a trial in America, and evidence must be accumulated to convince the jury.

Throughout the night, FBI agents watched the house in Oxford Place. At 7.15, a tall, spare man wearing *spectacles* walked out and hurried along the street. One of the FBI men followed him. Not far from the house, the suspect turned into a restaurant.

Despite the early morning hour, the restaurant was filled with dock workers, soldiers and sailors. The agent went inside. Over his coffee cup, he watched. His man had donned a soiled apron and was mopping the floor. He seemed to be about fifty-five, with mild blue eyes and wispy brown hair. You wouldn't look at him twice—he was just a sparrow among thousands of sparrows.

In the restaurant men were talking: cargoes, ship movements, sailing dates. The agent drained his coffee cup and went out.

For the next sixteen days and nights the spy was shadowed. Special agents, posing as salesmen and talkative bar-flies, unearthed one damning fact after another—damning because they matched so perfectly the chit-chat of the spy letters. Neighbours like to talk:

"Ernie? Yes, I know Ernie. He's *air raid warden* for the block

and you should have heard how he bawled people out for not dimming lights. Ernie takes the war seriously."

"Ernie? A kindhearted guy. *He had a dog that died of distemper* last summer and you'd have thought he'd lost his best friend."

"Ernie Lehmitz? Got one of the best *gardens* on the Island."

"Too bad the bank foreclosed on that *mortgage*."

"Sure I know him. He usually stops in here for a glass of beer. All he talks about is the *chicken farm* he plans to buy."

Slowly, the noose tightened. At eight o'clock on the morning of 27th June 1943, one year, four months and seven days after the first letter had been intercepted, Lehmitz was brought into the FBI offices. He was shown the letters, the great mass of evidence so painfully accumulated. The avalanche of facts was too much. He signed a complete confession.

He had first arrived in the United States in 1908 as clerk in the German Consulate in New York. There were several trips to Germany. During the last, in 1938, he was recruited by the German espionage system, trained in the use of secret inks and the labyrinthine ways of the spy. He was ordered to return to the United States in the spring of 1941, find steady employment, pose as a good citizen, lose himself among millions.

In his confession, Lehmitz implicated another spy, Erwin Harry DeSpretter. Both were sentenced to thirty years imprisonment.

How well Lehmitz had played his role was indicated a few weeks after his arrest when many of his Staten Island neighbours dropped in to offer Mrs. Lehmitz their sympathy. One of the women, who had a son in the service, said: "It can't be anything very bad. Why, that Ernie Lehmitz wouldn't hurt a flea."

But to the FBI, the trapping of this stoop-shouldered, mild-mannered spy had been one of the most tedious jobs of the war. A spy who scrubs floors and grows vegetables may not be glamorous—but he's pretty hard to catch.

Condensed from The American Legion Magazine

Death in the Lifeboat

By Walter Gibson

TEN MINUTES before midnight on Sunday, 9th March 1942, the torpedo struck the *Rooseboom*.

We had set off, three days before, from Padang, Sumatra—500 of us, military personnel who had been defending Singapore, Civil Service officials with their families, a smattering of other refugees. I had been asleep on deck and woke to find myself sprawling in the scuppers. The deck was already sloping so steeply that the rail was almost awash. As I threw myself into the water I heard choking cries for help: other voices were shouting, "Where are you, Mac?" "Is that you, Jock?"

Near me a naked man clung to a piece of debris. I shouted, "Do you mind if I share your piece of wood?"

"By all means, old man," he replied.

We must have clung there for more than an hour before we saw near us the blurred figures of people standing up in a lifeboat. The scene was one of pandemonium, with men scrambling desperately to get into the lurching boat. Then, one by one, we were pulled unceremoniously aboard the floating hell that was to be my abode for twenty-six endless days.

Our lifeboat was twenty-eight feet long and only eight feet at its widest. The gunwales were just a few inches above water. When dawn came a count revealed eighty of us in the boat, which had been built to hold twenty-eight. Most of us were standing—face to face

or back to back. It was impossible to change position. In the water, clinging to the boat, were fifty-five more survivors.

I was in the stern. Close by, his hand on the tiller, was the stout, red-faced Dutch captain of the *Rooseboom*. Near us, clad only in a shirt, was Brigadier "Archie" Paris, who had commanded the 11th Indian Division.

There were three women. One, pleasant-faced and motherly-looking, I recognized as Mrs. Nunn, wife of the Director of Works at Singapore. There was a woman of thirty or so, the wife of the Dutch chief-officer. The third was a slim Chinese, Doris Lim, who had been working for British Intelligence.

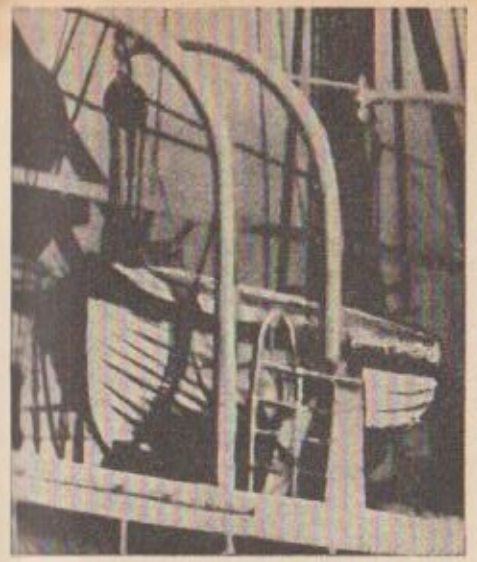
Perched in the bow were a dozen Javanese seamen.

The brigadier stood up in the stern and called for attention. We of the Indian Service knew him as a man with a brave record in two wars. Although almost dazed with exhaustion, he stood very erect, legs bare beneath the shirt tail, addressing his troops as if on a parade ground. "The captain," he said, "will be in command of the boat. I shall be responsible for discipline. I look to you all, as British soldiers, to retain your soldierly qualities until help arrives."

He gave us the meagre tally of our rations. With sinking hearts we learned that each would receive a tablespoonful of water every sun-up and a spoonful of tinned milk and water at night. A twelve-ounce tin of bully-beef would be shared among twelve people each day. From her handbag the Dutch mate's wife produced, of all surprising objects, a tablespoon which, while our water lasted, was to be our measure.

To lessen the unbearable overcrowding, every man who was not injured was to take a compulsory spell of four hours each day clinging to the life lines in the water.

Towards evening there was a dramatic arrival—Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas of the Indian Army Ordnance Corps, who had swum from a raft which had drifted towards us. His nerves were at breaking point. He told us that with him on the raft had been a dying white woman, one of her legs blown off by the explosion, and Major



A lifeboat aboard the Rooseboom —before disaster struck

The author—one of the five survivors

Brigadier Paris—he issued the rations

Mrs. Nunn—she led the prayers

Angus MacDonald of the Argylls. MacDonald had had with him a flask of brandy and had spent the day drinking it in an attempt to assuage his thirst. The effects in the heat were disastrous.

"Angus MacDonald is raving mad," said Douglas. "I had to leave him. He was trying to push me off the raft."

His voice rose excitedly as he continued his tale, which finally became a crazy, high-pitched babble. He would speak one sentence in English, the next in Urdu. Suddenly he struck out at everybody round him. I heard someone say: "Put him over before he tips the boat up." There was a splash.

The next morning Major Noel Corrie of the Engineers announced that, to ease the overcrowding, he and some volunteers would construct from floating debris a raft to be towed behind the boat. It was a shaky structure, tied together with strips of cloth and sisal fibre salvaged from the sea. When twenty men climbed aboard, it sank until they were standing waist-deep in the water.

Through the three days that followed, man after man slipped off the raft. At last there was only Corrie, more dead than alive, his upper body blackened by the sun, his legs bleached by the water. Paris ordered Corrie pulled aboard. That night he died.

Hunger's gnawing pain seemed to reach a climax fairly soon and then we forgot about it. But thirst! One always seemed to be trying to swallow, always licking one's lips—and with each day this effort became more painful. We were ordered not to drink sea water, but during the night there was much surreptitious drinking, and gradually people ceased to care. Those who drank large quantities went into a coma from which they never emerged, except crazed.

As we began to blister from the sun, people tore off what few clothes they had to dip them in the sea and put them over their heads. But the salt water would make the pain worse than before.

All of us became prey to hallucinations. The first victim was a colour sergeant of the Gordon Highlanders. One morning he said, "It won't be long now till the flying boat gets back."

"What flying boat?" I asked.

"The one that came last night," he said, "the one that took the women and wounded off."

A soldier leaned over the side and drank from the sea. "It's fresh!" he cried. "The water's fresh!"

I began to dream—fierce, vivid dreams of food and drink and friendly gatherings. Then I would wake to the creak-creak as the boat swayed in the current.

Slowly the spirit of comradeship with which we had set off vanished. We found ourselves constantly watching our fellows—covertly, suspiciously. From the beginning there had been a careful watch on the rations. "But who," we began to think, "is watching the watchers?" Each day's share-out became like the feeding of a band of ravenous animals.

We saw another indication of how things were going when a sergeant-major, who had been given a lifebelt for his spell in the water because he could not swim, refused to hand it over to another non-swimmer. He clung to the life-belt as if it were his last link with his world. In the end it was forcibly taken off him. That night we could hear him proclaiming his grievance. Then we heard someone strike him. Next morning he was gone.

Other people began disappearing during the night. No one asked any questions. At the back of our minds was the feeling that every man less meant more room in the boat.

About that time we became aware of a group of five men who sat huddled together up near the bow, talking in undertones and looking about them furtively. We could sense that they were up to no good.

One night a storm blew up and we shipped gallons of water. As some of us bailed frantically we heard screams and shouts, and in the morning twenty people were missing. It was then I became convinced that the men who had muttered in the bow had formed a murder gang, determined that, if everybody else had to go, they would survive.

As the days wore on, things became worse. For two days the

first officer lay in a coma, his face blistered, his head in his wife's lap while she crooned Dutch words of comfort to him. One night we heard her cry "*Nae, nae*" as though to dissuade him from something. Suddenly he broke away from her, shouted in English: "Going . . . going to swim . . . find help." Then he sprang over the side and swam away. His wife sat for nearly a day, moaning softly. Then, at sunset, there was a sudden movement in the boat, and she plunged overboard.

Brigadier Paris sank into a torpor. But he had a self-appointed guardian, young Captain Mike Blackwood, who performed little duties for the rapidly weakening Paris—even to the extent of saving part of his own tiny water ration for him.

One day the brigadier suddenly raised his head and said to Blackwood—quite quietly, very pleasantly: "I say, let's go along to the club for a drink."

Blackwood answered, as conversationally as if they had been strolling down St. James's: "Let's make it later, sir."

Blackwood announced the brigadier's death to the troops. As we slipped him over the side Blackwood repeated such passages from the burial service as he could remember. The brigadier was the only one for whom we could summon up enough strength to have such a service.

Poor Blackwood survived his friend by only a day. He slipped unconscious to the bottom of the boat and in the night was drowned in the lapping bilge water.

Within two hours of the brigadier's funeral, the Dutch captain was stabbed by his engineer. We heard a shout, a sudden splutter of Dutch invective, and before anyone could get to him, the engineer had buried a knife in the old man's ribs.

"Grab him!" someone shouted, and flung himself on the engineer as he tried to snatch the few remaining rations. The engineer broke away and jumped overboard.

That was the strange feature of every suicide. As people decided to jump overboard they seemed to resent the fact that others were

being left behind with a chance of safety. They would try to seize the rations and fling them overboard or try to make their last action the pulling of the bung which would let in the sea.

It was on the seventh evening, a Sunday, that we finished the last bottle of water.

Lieutenant-Colonel G. A. Palmer roused himself to speak to the boat's company. "I don't think there is much hope for us," he said. "Mrs. Nunn has suggested that we commit ourselves to God. She would like to conduct a service."

Somehow, heaven knows how, we had a Bible, waterlogged and tattered. Mrs. Nunn stood up, her face blackened by the sun, her voice cracked and whispering from thirst and weakness. She opened the Bible and read aloud. Then, with her, this strange mixed bag of tortured, desperate human beings quaveringly sang, "Abide with Me" and said the Lord's Prayer.

There were perhaps fifty of us left when that service was held. Thereafter men went quickly.

Then one morning Palmer was no longer there. Mrs. Nunn, hardly able to move her lips, managed to whisper to me, "Palmer was murdered. I saw them." Up in the bow, malignant and threatening, sat the five deserters. That day Mrs. Nunn slipped into unconsciousness and died.

Now the murder gang came out into the open. Suddenly they jumped from behind on a young soldier and drew a jagged bully-beef tin across his throat. Warrant-Officer MacKenzie said to me: "Don't you realize that we are all going to be killed? Those men intend to commandeer the boat."

I thought to myself, "Well, here's the showdown." I asked him, "How many men do you think we can rely on if we try to put them overboard?"

When darkness came MacKenzie moved about the among the others, then told me that he had fourteen men ready to deal with the murder gang. We moved down the boat, converging on the five men. One tough shouted, "Here they come!" and pulled out a bottle.

Drummer Hardy of the Argylls sprang forward. The bottle crashed down on his head. Two of the murder gang grabbed him and pushed him overboard. Then we were at their throats. We struggled and rolled in the bottom of the boat.

We did not seem to put them overboard one by one as much as to rush them over in a body. Three got their hands to the gunwale and tried to drag themselves back. Relentlessly we battered at their fingers with the rowlocks.

Perhaps by this stage there were a score of us left. I cannot really remember. Sun and salt water had rotted our remaining rags and so we were all naked. Great sores, where the flesh seemed to melt away, formed on our sun-blackened skin.

The order in which incidents happened after that is hazy to me, but I remember the day rain came, and the day we caught the gulls. Many a time we had seen the rain afar off. Tense and excited, we would wait with our mouths open. And then we would see it move right away from us. But our rain was a cloudburst of huge, cold, battering drops. I asked every man not to drink until, scooping with our hands, we had filled our four empty bottles. The rain which collected in the bottom of the boat was mixed with the bilge, but, the bottles filled, we lapped our fill.

The gulls, about twelve of them, arrived out of the blue, flew round us and then settled tamely on the boat and on our heads and shoulders. No one dared make the slightest move. Then, with one accord, we pounced. We caught seven, tore them apart and gulped the raw flesh like wolves.

Then—on and on, hour after hour, day after day. Drifting in a silence broken only by the creak of the boat and the wash of the water. No one speaking, rarely moving. At last there were only seven of us left alive: Doris Lim, a soldier, four Javanese seamen and I.

Suddenly I was roused from my stupor by the soldier's voice: "Jock! Jock! Help me, Jock!"

Two of the Javanese were pounding his head with rowlocks. A

third Javanese, with a tin pressed to form a blade, tore at his body. They were unquestionably mad.

One of the Javanese died that night. In the dark I crawled along the bottom of the boat and one by one found the rowlocks and threw them overboard. If the girl and I were to be the next to go, they must find some other weapon.

We dared not take our eyes off the three in the bow. But at night we could not keep our eyes open. Then one night I woke with a jerk as I felt a movement near my elbow. It was one of the Javanese. He grinned wolfishly as he repeated a word over and over again. It was Javanese for "land." Looking over the side I saw a shadow darker than the darkness.

We clung, all five of us, to the edge of the boat, afraid to let ourselves believe that this was really land and not an hallucination. Then came the unmistakable roar of surf.

We had been in the lifeboat for twenty-six days and drifted over 1,000 miles. The island on which we landed was Sipora, about sixty miles west of Sumatra. We stayed in a Malay village there for six weeks, until the Japanese arrived and carted us off to prison camp.

But one memory stands out above all others—the day the Malays brought me a mirror. Gazing back at me was a wild, black, high-cheekboned face like that of an Indian fakir, the hair and beard long and matted. It was perched on a body without flesh, the skin stretched black and burnt over the ribs. It was like looking at some charred piece, a twisted frame salvaged from a fire.

But as I laid down the mirror Doris Lim and I looked at each other, and suddenly, for the first time since the torpedo struck, a smile crossed her face. We were alive.

Condensed from the Sunday Express

Joey's Quiet War

By Thomas Johnson

ACROSS the battlefields north of Manila trudged a little Filipino woman bearing a knapsack on her bent shoulders. Several of the Japanese soldiers started to question her. Some of them, seeing her bloated, scarred brown face, understood and shrank back. To others she bared her chest and showed her sores. When she uttered the one word "leprosy," no sentry persisted, none examined the knapsack, none found out that—taped on her back—she carried a map of the Japanese defences north of Manila.

The map accurately indicated minefields which the advancing US troops desperately needed to know about. Sick and suffering, Joey Guerrero got the map through and thereby saved hundreds of American lives. It was but one of her great contributions to an Allied victory in the Philippines.

As a little girl, Josefina had wanted to become a nun, but she contracted tuberculosis and the sisters said she was not strong enough for their life. On her parents death a grandmother took her to a coconut plantation which she managed and brought her back to health.

Then Joey went to live with an uncle in Manila. There a young doctor, Renato Maria Guerrero, fell in love with the lively girl who had, to quote Joey herself, a "snub-nosed, funny little mug with unruly features." They were married. The future shone bright. But in the winter of 1941, when her daughter, Cynthia, was two years old, Joey began to lose strength and appetite. Swellings

appeared. Her anxious husband called in a specialist. As gently as he could, he told her the truth. "It is in an early stage," he said. "You are only twenty-three, and there are promising treatments. But children are susceptible, so you must leave your child." For hours, she sat in the doctor's office praying for the surpassing self-control she would need for so many years. She went home. The child was playing in the nursery. It was like dying, but Joey dared not even risk kissing Cynthia good-bye when she sent her to her grandmother.

Husband and wife then began to plan their fight against the disease and against ostracism. It had not been long since lepers had to ring a bell as they walked along the streets of Manila. Specialists told them that leprosy was now recognized as only feebly contagious among adults and that Joey was no menace to others. But she did need good medical care and rest.

There was to be neither. Three weeks later came Pearl Harbour. Soon Japanese soldiers swaggered in Manila's streets. One day five of them stopped Joey and four other young Filipinos and made clear their intent. Joey, five feet and seven stone of outraged womanhood, whacked the largest soldier with her umbrella until he and his companions made off. That night one of the other women telephoned Joey. "Come to our house," she said, and hung up.

Her friend's husband awaited Joey. "A woman of your spirit should join the guerrillas," he said. "You're the kind for our secret service." He told her the Filipino underground was sending information about the Japanese to General MacArthur in Australia to help plan the islands' liberation. Would she join them? "I can't do big things," said Joey, "but every little helps. OK!"

Joey was given a trial assignment: "As you live opposite a Japanese barracks, for the next twenty-four hours count how many soldiers and vehicles go in and out, when, and in what direction."

Behind drawn blinds, Joey noted everything that passed, and the time. She not only counted a truck-load of Japanese soldiers, but observed that they looked dirty, as if coming from active service. She took a full notebook to the address given her. There she signed

an oath of secrecy and loyalty. She had enlisted for what she calls "my quiet war." It was to last for three nerve-racking years.

Joey was given the job of watching the waterfront. There her keen eyes spotted hidden Japanese anti-aircraft guns. She made a sketch and concealed it in a hollowed-out fruit in a basket she carried. A Japanese soldier stopped her, pawed the fruit, greedily chose a large one, and walked on. Luckily she had put the sketch in a small fruit. After that she made only mental notes and did her drawing when she got home.

Joey was among the group of girls permitted to bring food to the starving Filipino and American prisoners. She radiated courage and faith to hollow-eyed troops, some of whom gave her information they had gleaned from talkative Japanese guards. Once a suspicious guard threatened her with a bayonet, finally gestured her on, giving her braided black hair a parting tug. Her hair ribbon concealed a prisoner's report, but it was tied too tightly to come off.

By September 1944 the approaching Americans were bombing Manila, smashing gun emplacements Joey had mapped for them. The Kempei Tai, the Japanese counter-intelligence police, had stool pigeons everywhere and many guerrillas were being caught and tortured or shot. Underground operations were now directed by the Allied Intelligence Bureau. After another cryptic telephone call, Joey met Manuel Colayco, formerly a professor at Santo Tomás University, now a captain in the Intelligence. Would Joey join the AIB? It might mean her life, but——

"What can I do?" she asked.

He told her to meet a truck at a rendezvous in the outskirts of the city. She wore wooden shoes in the hollow soles of which she had hidden thin packets of tissue paper containing guerrilla information about Japanese preparations to defend Manila. The truck took her fifty miles by rough back roads to Nagcarlán mountain. There a guide led her up a narrow path. A large boulder barred the route, and a voice from nowhere challenged them. Joey gave the password. A light flashed in her eyes from a tree above and then winked out.

The guide turned the boulder as if it were on a hinge. They found themselves in a clearing where perhaps a hundred Filipino guerrillas were living in nipa-palm barracks. Joey watched them set up a wireless apparatus and send off her message.

She became "just a little errand boy." By various routes to the guerrilla hide-out she brought reports, maps and photographs. And it was at the camp that she heard the glorious news radioed through: "The Americans are landing on Luzon!"

The guerrillas made handbills on a smuggled mimeograph machine—LIBERATION IS NEAR!—and added a ringing appeal for help. Joey took the bills to Manila. In the blackout she and other volunteers slipped them under doors or into the hands of passers-by.

Next she was told to spot Japanese ammunition dumps. One night she heard a signal at her door. She admitted a man in Japanese uniform who handed her what seemed to be a bag of vegetables. "Here's something for Dr. Guerrero," he whispered quickly, and then slipped from the house. Her husband, who was also in the underground, took the bag of "vegetables," but said nothing. Many nights thereafter were thunderous with exploding ammunition dumps. In the daytime Joey checked to see which dumps needed more "vegetable treatment."

But soon Colayco sent word that she was needed as a messenger again, so Joey returned to Nagcarlán. She hoped the mountain air would renew her ebbing strength. With the scarcity of food and medicine, she was increasingly feverish and exhausted. She suffered excruciating headaches, her feet were swelling and more sores appeared on her body. Surely, she prayed, God and the returning Americans would bring help.

Early in 1945, when the Americans were approaching Manila, Colayco summoned her for the most dangerous mission of all. The guerrillas had sent the American Army a map of the Japanese defences which showed a wide section free of mines. The Americans planned to attack there, but now the Japanese had mined the area heavily. The guerrillas needed someone to take a corrected map to

37th Division Headquarters at Calumpit, forty miles north of Manila. There was fighting all the way. The Japanese guarded every road and footpath, searched all passers-by. Vehicles could not get through. A woman on foot might, if she was small, shabby and courageous. "Just tell me where to go," Joey said quietly.

At first she walked under cover of night, but loss of sleep weakened her still more, and the headaches grew worse. She determined to try it by daylight. The first day a Japanese officer halted her, approached as if to search her. The map taped between her shoulder blades seemed to burn. As the officer came close, he peered at her face and saw that it was bloated and spotted with red. He stared at her in fear and then quickly waved her on. Joey suddenly realized that she had a terrible passport that would get her through.

After two days and nights on the road she reached American headquarters and delivered the map. Weak from sickness and reaction, she could not eat the pancakes and coffee which the Americans offered her, even though she had not tasted them for years.

Her road back took her through heavy fighting. Once, seeking shelter from shell bursts and snipers' bullets, she hid behind an American tank, which exploded and nearly killed her. When she reached Manila, she learned that Manuel Colayco had been terribly wounded during the last days of the fighting. She went to see him in the hospital where he lay dying. He tried to raise his torn body. "Fine job!" he whispered, in a last salute.

Joey Guerrero was decorated by the US Government with the Medal of Freedom with Silver Palm—the highest award for war service by a civilian; Cardinal Spellman presented to her a medallion in recognition of "Christian fortitude and concern for fellow sufferers." This photograph was taken when Mrs. Guerrero arrived in the United States for treatment of her leprosy

What They Call Bravery

By Carl Wall

"I SUPPOSE, now that I've got a medal to prove it, I'm what they call brave," said Lieutenant-Colonel Dollard Ménard. "But I'm still trying to work out just what the hell it was that made me brave—or what is called brave, anyway.

"I've thought about it a lot—at night, lying in the Birmingham hospital, coming back across the Atlantic. And I think I've got it pretty straight now."

He paused and held up four fingers. "I think there were four elements in this so-called bravery of mine.

"The first you could call optimism, egoism—or, for that matter, plain thoughtlessness.

"The second was discipline—the training you get in the army.

"Third, blind anger—a desire for revenge.

"The closest I can come to the fourth is a deep-seated feeling of 'What the hell?'

"Now I'll try to show you how it worked:

"The Dieppe show was really just a big Commando raid. I was in command of a battalion of 600—Les Fusiliers Mont-Royal. Our job was to land on the Dieppe beach, help cut away barbed wire, clean out snipers' nests and pillboxes, destroy certain objectives, pick up as many prisoners for Intelligence as we could and provide the rear-guard to cover re-embarkation.

"During the long night trip across the Channel I began thinking

of my men and I couldn't help wondering what they were thinking about. I knew most of them fairly well. They were nearly all French-Canadians like myself. I'd seen snapshots of their wives, kids, mothers and girls.

"I wondered how many of them would be coming back and I started praying—not for myself particularly, but in a general sort of way: 'O God, please let as many of us as possible come back from this.' Something like that.

"You see, I knew and every man in the battalion knew that a lot of us were going to get killed or hurt. But I didn't honestly think that *I* was going to get killed and I don't believe a single man in any of those boats thought *he* was going to get it.

"That's why I say the first element of what they call bravery is a sort of optimism or egoism. That's the thing that brings you up to the action itself—sort of pays your fare to the battlefield.

"Now we'll get down to the second:

"When we got within sight of Dieppe, just before dawn, we knew we were going to get hell all along the line. There were a lot of guns going, and at first you could pick out the sounds and tell what they were. The heavy, dull sound—like thunder—of the artillery behind Dieppe. The ripping clatter of the machine-guns. The boom of the mortars. The whine of the snipers' rifles. And then, as we moved in closer to shore, all these sounds began to merge into one continuous roar that pressed hard on your eardrums.

"Those last 200 yards were bad. The German fire was getting the range of our boats. I had a dry, hot feeling in my throat. I wanted to be doing something—not just sitting in that damned boat.

"The second the boat scraped on the beach, I jumped out and started to follow the sappers through the barbed wire. My immediate objective was a concrete pillbox on top of a twelve-foot parapet about 100 yards up the beach.

"I think I had taken three steps when the first one hit me. You always say a bullet or a piece of shrapnel hits you but the word isn't right. They slam you the way a sledge-hammer slams you. There's

no feeling of sharp pain at first. It jars you so much that you're not sure exactly where you've been hit—or what with.

"This piece of shrapnel hit me high in the right shoulder and knocked me down. I wasn't knocked out but I felt confused and shaken up. I've had exactly the same feeling on the football field after being tackled from behind when I thought I was clear. Stunned, surprised, completely frustrated.

"One of my men came up to me, and I yelled, 'Go on! I'm all right!' Stupid to yell that because I didn't know how I was.

"I managed to get up on to my feet, and then I brought my left hand round and felt my right shoulder. It was damp and sticky. My hand was covered with blood so I knew I was bleeding badly.

"I reached for my first-aid kit, which was strapped to my side just over the left hip. I fumbled with it and then I thought, 'How the hell can I bandage my shoulder with my left hand?'

"All this time I was standing practically upright on a flat stretch of beach that was being raked with rifle, machine-gun, mortar and artillery fire. The second that shrapnel hit me it seemed to shut out everything else. My only thought was to find out whether or not I was all in one piece. But the useless gesture of reaching for my first-aid kit seemed to bring everything back into focus.

"I think it was then that discipline and training came into the picture. The natural instinct of any untrained man on that beach would have been to dig a deep hole in the sand and crawl into it and stay there with his eyes shut. But discipline and training proved strong enough to keep me going. I saw that the pillbox was still holding out, and I began flanking it with a group of my men."

Colonel Ménard touched a purplish furrow high on his right cheek about half an inch from his eye.

"The second one," he said, "got me about a minute and a half later. There was pain with this one because the shrapnel burnt through the cheek and tore away quite a bit of flesh.

"I brought the back of my left hand round again and felt my cheek. It's funny the way you always instinctively try to feel the

Left: Approaching Dieppe, Canadian troops await the call to action stations

Below: The landing craft press on through smoke and waterspouts

Far left: Among the casualties—a man and his tank are left on an enemy beach

Left: Homeward bound, and the troops tend the "walking wounded"

spot where you've been hit. The cheek felt raw as though someone had ripped a fish hook through it.

"I crouched as low as I could and kept moving. We had covered about twenty-five yards when one of my men crumpled up in the sand in front of me. He was a major, and one of my closest friends. I thought a lot of him.

"He was holding both his hands to his stomach. It was a bad place to be hit because only a hospital operating-room could help him. His face was greyish and he was sucking hard for breath.

"I began fumbling for my first-aid kit again. My friend was watching me, but he didn't try to say anything. I managed to get out the packet of three one-quarter-grain morphine tablets. He opened his mouth and put his tongue out a little without taking his eyes off mine. I put a tablet on his tongue and he swallowed it. There was nothing else I could do. He knew it and I knew it.

"I went on towards the pillbox. Up to that point, I'd been more or less brave, let's say, because of discipline and training. I hadn't felt any particular anger because of my own wounds. But now, with my friend lying there, I was so blind angry that it pushed everything else out of my head. I wanted to kill, to get even.

"It was my job to direct the operations of my unit, so I had to control this rage. But it cleared my head, made me think.

"It also seemed to act as a sort of general anaesthetic. When we got up over the parapet, I was hit again—this time by a bullet. It knocked me sprawling backward and I fell on a steel picket, seriously injuring my spine. The bullet went clean through my right wrist and smashed two bones. I barely felt it. And yet, under ordinary circumstances—when you're not keyed up by emotion—I'll bet a man would damned well pass out if a heavy calibre bullet smacked into his wrist like that.

"My rage pulled me along to the pillbox, and I found that our men had cleaned it out nicely with grenades and hand incendiaries. From here I could get a good idea of what was going on and direct the various units by field wireless.

"Within the hour we got our part of the beach fairly well under control. But there were plenty of snipers still about and lots of mortar and shell fire. Shrapnel got me again when I tried to improve my position and get to still higher ground. This time it was my right leg above the knee. It had the same sledge-hammer effect as the first, but I managed to stay on my feet.

"Our men were filtering into the town itself and some of our tanks were on the promenade. I wanted desperately to get in there too. But I could feel myself slipping. I was getting weak.

"I fell, then tried to get up again but I couldn't. My whole right side felt warm and soggy. Then the pain began to come and I started praying, harder and harder. And then I passed out.

"I found out later that a couple of my men carried me back down the beach and got me on a boat. When I came round German planes were trying to machine-gun us and the boat's anti-aircraft batteries were making a hell of a racket about ten feet from my head. I looked round and saw that I was lying on cases of high explosives. I knew that one bullet would blow the whole works sky high but, by that time, I didn't give a damn. I thought, 'What the hell, if they haven't got me by this time they're never going to get me.' That feeling, I think, is the fourth element in what they call bravery.

"I lay there and watched our Spitfires drive the Nazis away as though I were watching a film. We got into the clear after a while and a Royal Navy man came along and gave me a swig of rum. A couple of minutes later, he came running back. 'Pardon me, sir,' he said, 'but have you got a stomach wound?' I shook my head and he looked greatly relieved. 'That's good, sir,' he said, 'because if you did have I shouldn't have given you that rum.'

"That struck me as the funniest thing I'd ever heard. I began laughing and the only thing that finally stopped me was the pain that was burning up my right side.

"You see, I knew I'd been through it and I felt pretty damned good about it."

Stalag Luft III : 1943

Tunnel to Freedom

By Paul Brickhill

As told to Allan Michie

STALAG LUFT III, at Sagan, Germany, half-way between Berlin and Breslau, held 10,000 captured airmen—most of them from the RAF—in the spring of 1943.

In April the camp was enlarged by the addition of a north compound and 700 of us were moved into it. Already, prisoners in the working parties that helped to build the compound had studied its layout and paced off its distances—with tunnels in mind. Escape was the one hope that had kept us going through the numbing months of captivity.

A few of the officers had dug tunnels at other camps, and round them we built "X" our escape organization. Head of "X" was Squadron Leader Roger Bushell, a tall South African who had been a lawyer in London, then a fighter pilot until shot down over Dunkirk. Bushell had already made two remarkable escapes and once had got almost to Switzerland before he was caught.

North compound was 1,000-foot square enclosed by two tall barbed wire fences, parallel and five feet apart, the space between crammed with barbed wire coils. Ten yards inside this barrier was the warning wire; step across it and the guards shot. Numerous sentry towers, fifteen feet high, each with searchlight

Since Paul Brickhill, then a flight-lieutenant of the Royal Australian Air Force, told this story for The Reader's Digest in 1946, he has become an internationally known author. Among his books are "Reach for the Sky," the story of Douglas Bader, "Escape or Die" and "The Dam Busters."

and machine-gun, were manned twenty-four hours a day. Twenty-five yards outside the wire on all four sides of the compound were dense pine woods which cut off any view of the outside world—but equally would cover an escape.

As soon as we moved in, notices were posted asking for volunteers to play cricket and softball. The notices were signed "Big X." Everybody knew what that meant and 500 signed up for the tunnel work. It was decided to start three long tunnels, "Tom," "Dick" and "Harry," in the hope that one would be undetected. We never used the word "tunnels"; too many eavesdropping guards understood English.

Tom was to be dug from block 123 to the wire, 150 feet away, and then on to the shelter of the woods. Dick was to be dug from block 122 towards Tom, so that it could either be joined with Tom's shaft or be dug all the way to the woods. Harry was to begin from block 104, and drive to the woods on the north.

OF COURSE the tunnels would have to start from within our huts. Each hut was 100 feet long, with sleeping quarters, wash-room and small kitchen. The Germans had built these huts about a foot off the ground, so that the guards could look underneath to see if we were up to any funny business. There were usually several of these "ferrets" about, easily spotted by their blue overalls. With torches and long steel probes they searched for hidden trap-doors and tell-tale sand from tunnels.

Three teams were organized, each under a veteran tunneller. Wally Floody, a Canadian mining engineer, was technician-in-chief. Every volunteer was interviewed by the "X" chief of his block. Miners, carpenters and engineers were given the work of tunnelling. Tailors were organized to turn out disguises. Artists set up a forgery shop to fake papers. Any man who spoke fluent German was told to make friends with a ferret, keep him always in sight, cultivate him and eventually try to bribe him to bring in to the compound items needed from the outside.

One day a new ferret, a particularly zealous one, appeared on duty and we labelled him "Keen Type." Within a month, however, a contact had so cultivated him that he lost his zest for anti-escape vigilance. He would come into the compound, walk straight to his contact's room and say, "Keen Type here. Can I come in?" and then settle down for tea and a biscuit.

Prisoners without any special skills were used either as "penguins," to dispose of sand from the tunnels, or as "stooges," to keep watch on ferrets. For the next year we had 300 stooges working in shifts every day. They reported to "Big S," the head security officer, a tall American colonel.

Once the security system was working we went ahead on the tunnels. The Germans had overlooked one detail. In each hut, the wash-room, kitchen and a small section where there was a stove had concrete floors and stood on brick and concrete foundations which had no openings through which the security guards could probe. These were the places from which we started work.

The first job was to build secret trap-doors. At any hour of the day or night, the Germans would rush into a block shouting, "*Aus, Aus!*" and then upset beds, pry into cupboards, and rip up floor and wall boards, looking for tools, civilian clothing, buttons, nails, anything an escaper might use. Yet ingenuity, backed by three years of weary experience, built trap-doors they couldn't find.

By luck we got hold of a little cement left over from building the camp. A Polish team cast a removable block to replace a slab about two feet square chipped from the floor of block 123. When a little sand and dirt had been rubbed round the edges, nobody could spot it. This was Tom's entrance.

Dick's trap-door in block 122 was the most ingenious. In the wash-room floor was an iron grating through which waste water ran into a concrete well three feet deep. The drain-pipe that led from this sump was so placed that there was always some water in the well. While stooges kept watch outside, the Poles removed the iron grill, bailed out the well and, with a cold chisel acquired by bribing a

guard, freed the whole concrete slab that formed one side of the well so that it was removable at will. When the slab was in place and the cracks sealed with soap, the waste water rapidly accumulated, making everything look most unsuspicious.

Harry's entrance was also tricky. The tall heating stove in room 23 of block 104 stood on tiles imbedded in a concrete base about four feet square. The men moved the stove back, chipped the tiles free and reset them in a concrete trap-door which looked precisely like the original base. Five of the tiles cracked in the process. They were replaced by tiles stolen from a cookhouse in East compound and smuggled in to us.

It had been a risky business. Harry's floor was up for about ten days in all, hidden from the ferrets only by a carelessly placed mattress, but we got away with it.

Now we were set for the more dangerous business of tunnelling. The distances, direction and angles of the three tunnels had been computed by rough trigonometry. We had learned that German sound detectors could hear nothing below twenty-five feet, so we decided to sink shafts thirty feet straight down from the three trap-doors before heading for the woods.

THE LIGHT, sandy soil was easy to dig, but it needed almost solid shoring. As a start we made each man provide two bed slats. This first levy wasn't too bad but by the time the fifth and sixth levies took more slats, it was hard to sleep.

Early in May 1943, the first sand was cut away. Teams worked from just after morning roll-call right through to the evening roll-call with only a short break for lunch.

The penguins had the troublesome job of disposing of the bright yellow sand, which showed up glaringly if dumped on the dun-coloured soil above ground. Some of the sand could be stirred into the soil of our tiny gardens, but that didn't begin to solve the problem. So we took dozens of small towels and sewed them into sausage-shaped sacks. A penguin would hang one of these, filled with sand,

in each trouser-leg and wander casually out to the playing ground. There stooges would be staging boxing matches, volleyball games or pretended brawls. Once in among the men the penguin, hands in pockets, would pull strings that freed pins at the bottom of the sausage sacks and let the sand trickle to the ground. Scores of scuffling feet would quickly discolour it and trample it into the surface. When we were going well, we kept 150 penguins busy disposing of tons of sand under the noses of the ferrets.

The tunnels were scooped out with little coal shovels and iron scrapers made from our cooking-stoves. The bores were about two feet square and shored with box frames made of bed slats, notched to fit. We saved our few nails to build shaft ladders.

AT THE BASE of each shaft, roomy chambers were dug for the use of carpenters and fitters and for the ventilating equipment. One day, when three diggers were thus enlarging the base of Dick's shaft, a frame began to leak sand. In a matter of seconds the leak became an avalanche. Two diggers scrambled out, but the third, Wally Floody, was almost smothered before he was got out. Dick's shaft filled almost to the top, but the job was grimly done again.

Veterans had learned that you could not tunnel far without fresh air, and that holes poked up to the surface were not adequate. By luck, a copy of a modern-mechanics type of magazine came into camp and it contained an article which described a home-made air pump. We promptly set to work to make one.

Our "tin bashers" collected Red Cross dried milk tins, cut off the ends and fitted the cylinders together to build pipe. They wrapped the joints with German propaganda newspapers. The pipe was laid in a ditch along the tunnel floor and covered with sand. At the far end was a nozzle which delivered fresh air. The air was forced through the pipe by shifts of pumpers who operated a bellows constructed from kit bags. This first outfit worked perfectly and we promptly built two more. Now we could close the trap-doors and work without fear of interruption from the ferrets.

Our electrical specialists rounded up odd bits of wiring left behind by the builders. Then they surreptitiously rearranged the camp wiring, gaining a few score feet in the process. They wired the three shafts and made hidden connexions to the camp circuit. We stole bulbs from corridors and we had light to dig by. When sometimes the Germans neglected to switch on the power during the day, we used home-made lamps, tin cans with pyjama cord wicks burning in margarine. They were a bit smelly.

The digging teams evolved a rigid system. Number one digger lay full length on his side and one elbow, hacking away at the tunnel face and pushing the sand back towards his feet. Number two lay facing the other way, his legs overlapping number one's. He collected the sand in special boxes which were placed on trolleys and hauled by home-made ropes back to the shaft.

These trolleys, strong enough to carry two sand boxes or one man, were first-class installations. They had carved flanged wooden wheels fitted with "tyres" cut from tin cans. The hubs even had ball bearings, smuggled in by a tame ferret. The track rails were made from barrack mouldings. When the tunnels became long, the diggers sprawled on the trolleys and pushed their way to the working face.

At times it was stifling hot in the hole. Men worked naked or in the hated long underpants issued to prisoners. Dirt stains on their outer clothes would have given the show away. Up above we rigged rough showers where the diggers could quickly wash off all tell-tale sand before roll-calls.

The diggers learned to take sand falls in their stride. The only warning would be a slight rustle and then the number one digger would be buried under a pile of suffocating sand which smothered lamps and air line. Number two man would have to work fast to get him out.

BY THE END of May, a month after digging commenced, each of the three tunnels was about seventy feet long. We were nearly into summer, when escapers could sleep out and live off the land.

The X leaders decided to concentrate on Tom, which had least distance to go. A week later they set up the first "half-way house" at the 100-foot mark. This was a little chamber built from the end frames of our wooden bunks. In it men could turn round without having to go back to the shaft. Calculations were that Tom's half-way house was just under the warning wire. That left 100 feet to go to get just inside the wood.

Other X groups were busily preparing the equipment we'd need. Our forgery department of fifty men turned out phoney passports and identity cards. We called it "Dean & Dawson," after the British travel agency.

Some of our guards could be tempted with a gift of coffee or chocolate, and once they had smuggled in one item they couldn't refuse more, because we might give them away to the commandant. In this way we got coloured inks, pens, brushes, special types of paper, magnets to make compasses, radio parts to build our illegal receiver on which we got daily news bulletins, a camera and equipment to make photos for our fake passports, hammers, saws, pliers, nails and maps.

A few guards, smoothly cultivated by our linguists, were even persuaded to lend us their *Zahlbuch*, combined paybook and identity card, while our forgers made copies. The faking of documents was an incredibly finicky job. Whole sheets of simulated typewriting were drawn by hand, complete with overtyping, imperfect letters and bad shifts. Other documents called for lines of close print or endless whorls of "engraving." Forgers ripped fine paper from Bibles and linen covers from books to make identification books. One document needed in crossing frontiers was so complicated that it would take a skilled forger five hours a day for a month to make one. Letterheads were "embossed" with toothbrush handles. German eagle and swastika stamps were cut from rubber boot heels. Altogether, "Dean & Dawson" outfitted the escapers with more than 400 forged documents.

An Australian pilot made compasses—the cases from melted

gramophone records, the glasses from broken windows, the needles from sewing needles rubbed on a magnet.

In the tailor's shop, sixty men made civilian clothes out of RAF uniforms and turned out close copies of Luftwaffe uniforms. Escapers caught wearing exact copies would be shot as spies, but by the Geneva Convention we could use imitations.

Half a dozen map makers traced a variety of maps and ran copies off on a makeshift duplicator. They made the gelatine from fruit jelly, the ink from the crushed lead of indelible pencils.

WE LEARNED the Americans were to be moved in six weeks to a separate compound and they had put in a lot of work on the tunnels. So evening shifts were added to hurry things up. We had to take greater chances with sand. More of it was dug into our vegetable gardens and some scattered near the upturned soil round a new camp theatre. One day a probing ferret turned over some bright yellow sand in a garden. This touched off a series of frantic but futile searches. The Germans dug a trench between block 123 and the wire, but it was not deep enough to reveal Tom.

By the end of June we calculated that Tom had reached just under the edge of the wood and we prepared to dig a shaft straight up to the surface. Just then a horde of Germans suddenly appeared and began to cut away the trees! It was actually mere coincidence; they had decided to build a new compound there. They chopped the trees back for fifty yards, but time for the Americans was short and it was decided to break Tom out anyway, and let the escapers crawl the rest of the way to cover.

We had so much sand coming up that we were desperate. Someone suggested storing it temporarily in Dick. Every evening a stream of penguins carrying cardboard Red Cross boxes strolled across to Dick's hut and dumped sand down the shaft. Even that was not enough. The X leaders decided to take a long chance, store sand in Red Cross boxes under our beds and hope that the Germans wouldn't find it until it could be properly disposed of.

Tom was now 260 feet long, with a few yards to go to its goal. Bushell decided to lie low for a few days to allay suspicion. Then ferrets found the boxes of sand in our huts. Heavy transport wagons were brought into camp and trundled all round in an effort to collapse any tunnels we might have. They only wrecked our vegetable gardens.

A day or so later, in a last suspicious search of block 123, a ferret accidentally jabbed his probe into the edge of Tom's trap-door.

That was the end of Tom.

The ferrets couldn't find how to open the trap, so they broke it in. They dynamited Tom and incidentally blew up part of the roof of block 123. They were so relieved at discovering Tom that they took no reprisals or even precautions.

A mass meeting decided that work would go ahead on Dick and Harry. However, it was deemed wise to do no more until winter, when we assumed vigilance would slacken because it is a bad season for escapes.

At the end of August 1943 the Americans were moved to their new compound and we threw a great party on home-brewed raisin wine as a farewell.

While we were waiting for winter, it was decided to try some above-ground escapes. For one of them, the carpenters made imitation German rifles out of wood—they got the exact measurements by sneaking up behind guards with callipers and measuring the parts. These they leaded with pencil to resemble metal and polished until you couldn't tell them from the real thing. Periodically the Germans escorted small parties of prisoners through the gates for delousing our clothes and the idea was to stage an unofficial delousing party of our own. Three prisoners, disguised as Luftwaffe *Unteroffiziers*, took twenty-four other prisoners in tow, passed the inspection at the gate and made off into the woods. A few minutes later six senior officers, including the Battle of Britain fighter ace, Bob Stanford Tuck, tried to get through but were detected.

We were all forced to stand on parade for nearly seven hours

while the three missing men were identified. Later, all were rounded up. One man, a fluent Spanish speaker, who posed as a foreign worker, got to Czechoslovakia and then by train almost to the Swiss border, where he got out and walked right across a narrow strip of Swiss territory without knowing it and back again into Germany, where a frontier guard nabbed him. The other two got to a Luftwaffe airfield, sneaked into an old Junkers trainer and were just warming up the engine when a German pilot coincidentally came along to fly it and caught them.

We were ready to start tunnelling again early in 1944. Dick was almost filled in with Tom's sand, and anyway the Germans had started to build a new compound where Dick was to have broken out. That left Harry. But snow lay deep on the ground and sand disposal stumped us. One of the tunnellers suggested we put it under the theatre. He had noticed the Germans never looked there.

We had built the theatre ourselves and taken care to leave no openings for the ferrets to peep through. Underneath was a deep excavation. Our engineers adjusted one seat so that it swung back on hinges and under it they cut a trap-door. Into this the penguins dumped kit bags full of sand every night.

THREE TEAMS, ten veteran diggers in each team, pushed Harry ahead up to twelve feet per day. By the end of January, the first "half-way house" was built 100 feet out. The planners had calculated that 300 feet of tunnel in all would bring us out into the shelter of the trees.

It was a long dig, and conditions were getting worse. The ground was cold and damp. Every digger suffered continuously from colds. Most of them were spitting black from breathing the fumes of our fat lamps; we had run out of electric wire. Sand falls kept occurring nearly every day.

But by mid-February another 100 feet had been dug and the second half-way house was put in. This was just about under the far boundary wire; there was 100 feet still to go.

Then we got a small break. German workmen hooking up loudspeakers laid down two large coils of electric wire, intending to use them in a few minutes. A prisoner calmly walked off with one coil. A mock fight quickly broke out and in the confusion we got the second coil. The German workmen were afraid to report the loss. (At the end, when the Gestapo found the wire in Harry, three of them were shot.)

That haul gave us 600 feet of wiring, enough for lights right up to the digging face.

THE CHIEF FERRET again became suspicious. Wally Floody, our chief penguin, our security chief and half a dozen of the key diggers were suddenly transferred to a compound several miles away. That was a blow. It was bad enough losing key men, but it was worse that the Germans obviously knew we were up to something.

By 8th March 1944, the final 100-foot section was dug and a chamber excavated at the end. In four days four of the best diggers carved straight upward, fitting ladders to the side as they progressed, until they struck pine-tree roots. They estimated that they were about two feet below the surface, just inside the wood. They boarded over the top of the shaft and left the remainder to be dug on the night of the break. By 14th March the tunnel was ready. The trap-door was closed and its sides cemented up to wait for milder weather and a night suitable for our getaway.

The very next day the chief ferret sent his men to search block 104. One of them even ran his probe round the cement that sealed Harry's trap-door. It held.

About 500 men had worked on the tunnels but we estimated that only 220 would be able to pass through it during the hours of darkness. Bushell was allowed to draw up a list of sixty workers, twenty more were nominated by secret ballot because of their work on the project, and 140 names were drawn out of a hat.

The lucky ones began their preparations. We had enough money to buy train tickets for forty men; the rest were to walk across

country. Bushell and other men who'd been loose in Germany conducted lectures, giving hints and advice. A Czech pilot described the border mountains of Czechoslovakia, sixty miles away, for which most of the foot travellers intended to head.

After roll-call on the morning of Friday, 24th March, Roger Bushell announced that the escape would take place that night. There was six inches of snow on the ground, which was not good, but there would be no moon. Our meteorologist thought there would be a wind to drown suspicious noises.

The "Dean & Dawson" boys filled in their forged documents and stamped them with the correct date, which of course couldn't have been done until then. Some escapers were to go as foreign workers, others as neutrals, others as German officials, soldiers and civilians—and each man's papers had to fit his story.

A digger went out to Harry's end to see how far we had to go to break through. When he jabbed a stick upward three inches, he struck daylight, much to his surprise. At least, it seemed, there wouldn't be any difficulty in getting to the surface.

We laid blankets at the bottom of the shafts to deaden sounds and nailed planks on the trolleys so the escapers could lie on them and be pulled along. When darkness came the escapers put on their disguises. Our improvised iron rations were issued, a revolting but nourishing combination of grated chocolate, oatmeal, crushed biscuits, vitamin pills, barley, dried milk and other concentrated foods all boiled together.

BY HALF PAST EIGHT it was announced that all was ready. Ten minutes later the first escaper went down the ladder, well turned out in a civilian suit and carrying a home-made brief-case. The second, dressed as a workman, followed on his heels. Roger Bushell, carrying an attaché-case and looking like a smart businessman in his grey herring-bone lounge suit, black overcoat and dark hat, went down among the first five.

There was a bad wait when the first man was unable to prise the

roof boards loose. It was almost an hour, an agonizing time for the men lying along the tunnel, before the swollen boards came loose and the earth was removed. Up above twinkled a few stars and down the shaft came the sweet fresh air of freedom.

But when the digger cautiously stuck his head out he got a shock. Instead of being just inside the woods the hole was ten feet short of the trees and its gaping opening was a bare fifteen yards from a sentry tower.

We were stunned when he broke the news. Would the work of 500 men for more than a year end in complete failure. But the men were in no mood to be stopped. To go now was risky. To wait a month for the next moonless period and in the meantime dig another thirty feet of tunnel was equally risky. Besides, the forged papers were all dated and would have to be redone. That decided it.

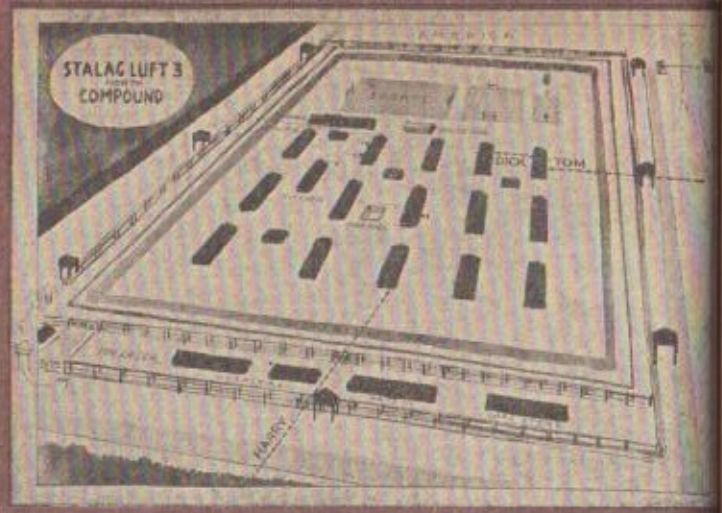
The first man up crawled to a brushwood fence, paying out a rope by which he could signal when it was safe for the next man to emerge. The sentry in the tower paid no attention to the wood but played his searchlight on the barbed wire fence and compound. Two other sentries patrolled back and forth along the wire. When both were out of sight the rope was tugged and the second man slipped across into the wood.

It took more than an hour for the first twenty to make it. They were all going by train, and they headed for the Sagan railway station a quarter of a mile away. From time-tables smuggled in by guards we knew exactly when the trains were due.

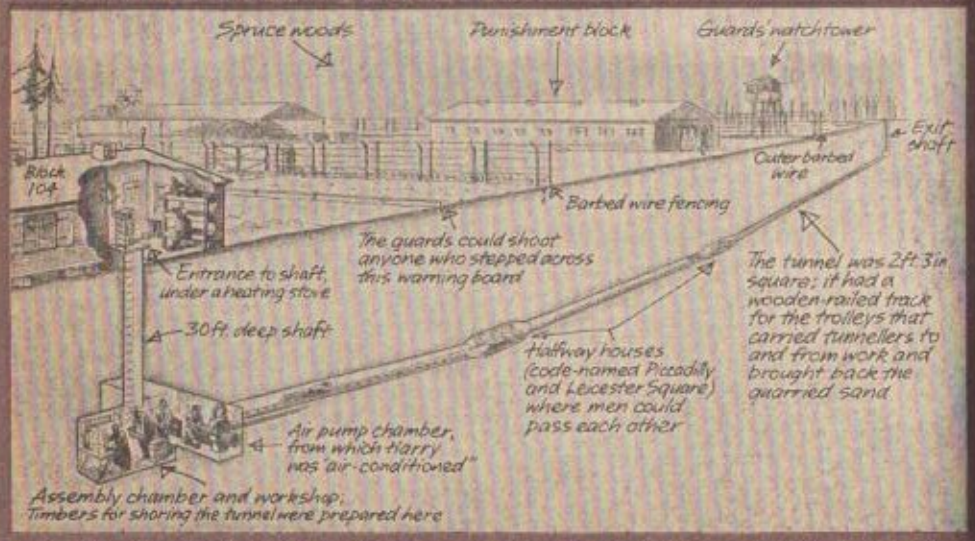
Back in block 104 the initial delay had been terrible. Obviously something had gone wrong, but what? Escapers sat about, a queer collection of well-dressed civilians, workmen and a German corporal, hoping that ferrets would not appear. Just after half past nine the men at the trap-door felt a blast of cold air. It could only mean that we'd broken out. A muffled cheer went round the block.

There were other interruptions. Two bad sand falls held up the show for about an hour and a half in all. Sometimes the trolleys left their rails—more delays. Men going out with suit-cases or blankets

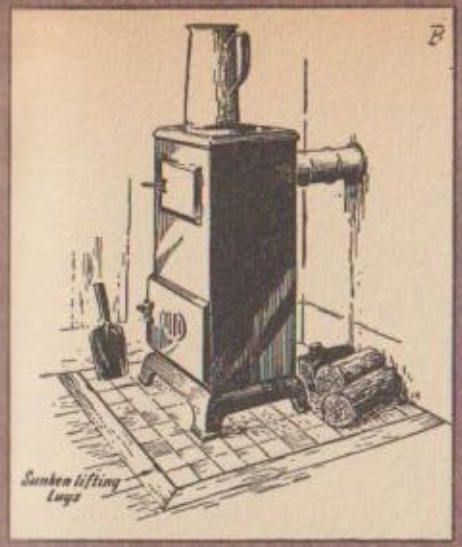
This portfolio of illustrations comes from the collection of Flight-Lieutenant Ley Kenyon, DFC, who was a member of the escape organization at Stalag Luft III. An art teacher by profession, he kept the "official" record of the tunnelling project, and his drawings, were hidden in the camp. Kenyon was one of the seventy-six prisoners who escaped on 24th March 1944, but he was recaptured within half a mile of the camp



The north compound; 1,400 of us lived here


Spruce woods
Punishment block
Guards' watch-tower
Exit shaft
Block 104
Outer barbed wire
Barbed wire fencing
The guards could shoot anyone who stepped across this warning board
Entrance to shaft, under a heating stove
The tunnel was 2ft 3in square; it had a wooden-railed track for the trolleys that carried tunnellers to and from work and brought back the quarried sand
30ft. deep shaft
Halfway houses (code-named Piccadilly and Leicester Square) where men could pass each other
Air pump chamber, from which Harry was "air-conditioned"
Assembly chamber and workshop. Timbers for shoring the tunnel were prepared here

At 320 ft, Harry was the longest escape tunnel built in either of the world wars



The entrance to Harry. The tiles were imbedded in a concrete trap-door

I drew this sketch of Roger Bushell, head of the escape organisation, at one of its meetings. He was one of the escapees, but was recaptured and shot

I was dared to show this caricature of the north compound commander to its subject. To my astonishment he was delighted with it, and signed it "Your slavedriver"

"A German photographer took pictures like this for us to send home, but we had to agree that they could use copies for propaganda purposes — presumably to show how happy and well-fed we were!

Working at the face—
there was always the danger
of a roof-fall

At a halfway house, boxes of
sand were transferred from
one trolley to another

A box of sand arrives
at the shaft entrance

We were very proud of our air-conditioning
pump, constructed from dried milk tins
and with a bellows made of two kitbags

After a shift at the tunnel-face, the men
rested in the workshop, where all the
tools and shoring were made. The can
hanging from the ceiling is the alarm signal
which was operated from above ground.

"Penguins" disposed of some of
the sand we tunnelled. They
had sacks inside their trouser
legs, and strings, reached
through their pockets, to pull
the pins that released the sand

To all Prisoners of War!

The escape from prison camps is no longer a sport!

Germany has always kept to the Hague Convention and only punished recaptured prisoners of war with minor disciplinary punishment.

Germany will still maintain these principles of international law.

But England has besides fighting at the front in an honest manner instituted an illegal warfare in non combat zones in the form of gangster commandos, terror bandits and sabotage troops even up to the frontiers of Germany.

They say in a captured secret and confidential English military pamphlet,

THE HANDBOOK OF MODERN IRREGULAR WARFARE:

"... the days when we could practise the rules of sportsmanship are over. For the time being, every soldier must be a potential gangster and must be prepared to adopt their methods whenever necessary."

"The sphere of operations should always include the enemy's own country, any occupied territory, and in certain circumstances, such neutral countries as he is using as a source of supply."

England has with these instructions opened up a non military form of gangster war!

Germany is determined to safeguard her homeland, and especially her war industry and provisional centres for the fighting fronts. Therefore it has become necessary to create strictly forbidden zones, called death zones, in which all unauthorised trespassers will be immediately shot on sight.

Escaping prisoners of war, entering such death zones, will certainly lose their lives. They are therefore in constant danger of being mistaken for enemy agents or sabotage groups.

Urgent warning is given against making future escapes!

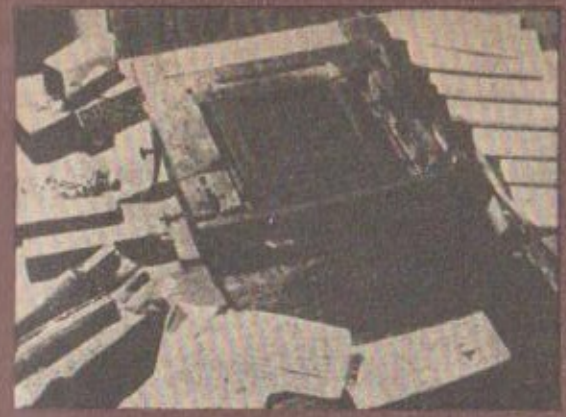
In plain English: Stay in the camp where you will be safe! Breaking out of it is now a damned dangerous act.

The chances of preserving your life are almost nil!

All police and military guards have been given the most strict orders to shoot on sight all suspected persons.

Escaping from prison camps has ceased to be a sport!

Our jailers issued hundreds of copies of this leaflet to discourage us from escaping. The threat it contains was carried out when fifty of the men who had escaped through Harry were shot



We forgers had a home-made printing press to turn out maps and documents for escapees

The night of the escape: all the clothes had been made by our tailors — even copies of German uniforms

wrapped round them would find themselves jammed in a narrow tunnel, afraid to pull loose for fear of causing a fall. We were running far behind schedule.

At midnight the air raid sirens sounded and all lights, including our illegal ones in the tunnel, were switched off. It was obvious now that not more than 100 men would get away before daylight. Lamps had to be lighted and passed along the tunnel.

We up above heard the faraway sound of falling bombs and the huts rattled as RAF blockbusters fell crashing on Berlin, 100 miles away. At any other time we would have cheered, but that night we cursed. It was about two in the morning before the lights came on again. In the meantime, one by one the escapers had been crawling silently from the tunnel mouth and away into the woods.

The worst moment came at about half past four. The sentry in the tower shouted to a guard patrolling below. The guard went up the tower ladder and the sentry descended and walked straight towards the hole. He could hardly miss seeing it. Steam from the heat of the tunnel poured out of it, and from it to the wood led a black trail across the snow where escapers had crawled. The sentry, apparently blinded by looking at his searchlight, came on until he was a bare four feet from the hole, turned round and squatted down. For five minutes he remained there, while the men in the shaft hardly dared breathe. At last the sentry went back to his tower. More escapers slipped through the tunnel and away.

When it was almost five the RAF man in charge decided it was getting too light. "Get the next three men down," he said. "Then we finish. If all of them get away without detection the Huns won't know a thing until morning roll-call and the boys will have an extra four hours before the hunt is on."

The last three men quickly descended. Just as the third man vanished up the tunnel on the trolley, we heard the crack of a rifle.

Two escaping men had reached the rendezvous tree in the wood, another man, crawling, was half-way to it, a fourth man had just emerged from the tunnel when the rope signaller saw a guard

approaching. If he kept on coming he was bound to step right into the hole. The men outside froze to the ground when they felt two sharp warning tugs on the rope. The German strode on. He was seven yards away and still hadn't seen the hole.

Left, right, he strode on, probably half asleep, and one foot came down a bare twelve inches from the tunnel mouth. His next step almost trod on the man lying doggo alongside the opening. He took one more pace, and then he snapped out of his daze. He didn't even notice the man lying at his feet, but he must have seen the black track across the snow. Then he saw the man lying half-way to the wood, and raised his rifle to shoot. At that moment one of the escapers waiting by the tree leaped into sight and waved his arms, shouting, "*Nicht schiessen, Posten! Nicht schiessen!*" ("Don't shoot, sentry! Don't shoot!")

The sentry, startled, shot wild. The two men at the edge of the wood and the man who had crawled half-way came slowly forward, hands raised. And then, right at his feet, the last escaper, still unseen, rose slowly. The guard jumped back a yard and looked downward. There in front of him was Harry's gaping mouth. He whipped out a torch and flashed it down the hole into the face of the eighty-first escaper, hanging precariously on the ladder.

The sentry blew his whistle. In a moment guards came running from all directions.

Harry's long life had ended.

In block 104 there was a frantic scramble to burn our lists and papers, break up equipment and get rid of civilian clothes. The men in the tunnel were inching back along the trolleys, expecting a shot from behind. When the last man came up, the trap-door was sealed down and the stove replaced.

In a few minutes there came a scratching sound from below. A ferret had worked back along the tunnel and couldn't get out. We let him stay there.

By six in the morning the compound was swarming with guards, machine-guns covered the doors and windows, and ferrets combed

block 104 calling, "*Aus! Aus!* Efferbody *aus!*" As each man came out of block 104, a ferret grabbed him and forced him to strip in the snow, boots and all, while every article of clothing was inspected.

While the search was going on an adjutant came running to implore us to open the trap-door. The ferret was still down there and they were afraid he would suffocate. We opened it; the ferret down below was not a bad type—he was the only one with nerve enough to go down the tunnel.

IN A MATTER of hours the whole countryside was roused in the biggest man-hunt of the war. The radio warned all civilians to be on the watch. SS and Gestapo men, Luftwaffe men and even naval men from Stettin and Danzig were mobilized for the search.

Back in the compound we waited for reprisals. Harry had broken the world's record for the number of escapers who got away and we expected the Germans to take it out on us. The Gestapo arrived to investigate, but its agents, never liked by the regular army, got no help from the ferrets and found nothing. We even managed to filch two of their torches. But they did uncover a black market—run by the commandant and his staff! The hapless commandant was promptly whisked off for a court martial.

Most of the seventy-six men who got away were nabbed within a day or so, although some got as far as Danzig and Munich. All were taken to a filthy Gestapo prison in Gorlitz, forty miles away. From Gorlitz, fifteen men were brought back to Stalag Luft III. We could learn nothing more.

Then a fortnight after the break, our senior officer was called to the commandant's office. Stiffly the German read out the official report—of the seventy-six escaped officers forty-one had been shot!

Our senior officer called a meeting and announced the dreadful news. Under the Geneva Convention, drastic penalties must not be inflicted upon prisoners who attempt escape. The Germans had never before done such a thing. We thought most likely the announcement was a bluff to dissuade us from further escape attempts.

We held a memorial service in the compound, however, and every man defiantly wore a black diamond of mourning on his sleeve.

When the Germans posted the list of dead it contained not forty-one but forty-seven names, among them the leaders—Roger Bushell; Tim Walenn, who ran the forgery factory; Al Hake, the compass maker; Charlie Hall, the photographer.

For days the compound was shaken with grief and fury. Then three more names were added to the list of dead. The Germans never gave us any reason for the shootings, or why they shot only fifty of seventy-six. A couple of weeks later they brought in urns carrying the cremated ashes of the dead, which we placed in a memorial vault.

In June a letter arrived, written in Spanish and signed by a fictitious name. That was the signal that one escaper, a Dutch pilot in the RAF, had reached England. A postcard from Sweden, signed with two false names, revealed that two Norwegians had written it. With fifteen men sent back to Stalag Luft III and fifty shot, that left eight unaccounted for.

Not till long afterwards did we learn that they had been sent to the notorious Oranienburg concentration camp. Nobody had ever escaped from a concentration camp, the Gestapo boasted. Within a few months the eight had tunnelled out. They were eventually rounded up, but by then Germany was in the chaos of collapse and they were not shot.

If the Germans shot our fifty comrades to frighten us from building more tunnels, they made a psychological blunder. "X" was re-formed round two veteran tunnellers and we immediately began work on "George," which started under the theatre. George was on as grand a scale as Harry and we were almost ready to break out when we were hurriedly evacuated. The Russians were only thirty miles away. We were forced to march for weeks half across Germany. We were at Lubeck on 2nd May 1945, when tanks of the British 2nd Army swept forward and set us free.

The Short, Sharp Battle of Kelibia Point

By George Palmer and Frederic Sondern

ONE EVENING in April 1943, as the battle for Tunisia was thundering into its last phase, a signal to British naval headquarters at Sousse from Sir Andrew Cunningham, commander-in-chief of naval forces in the Mediterranean, ordered three motor torpedo boats to "carry out a slow in-shore patrol off the Cape Bon peninsula in daylight," and to "open the sea lanes in that area."

It sounded crazy. MTB's operated at night. They were not expected to commit daylight suicide under Nazi shore batteries and swarms of Me-109 fighters.

But there was good reason for the order. Allied troops were ready to open the final offensive, and it was essential for General Eisenhower to know whether the Afrika Korps was going to stage a Dunkirk. Reconnaissance planes could get no accurate information about the superbly camouflaged landing stages which could be used for an evacuation, or the coastal gun positions which would protect them. There was no alternative but to send small boats to almost certain destruction.

All night the crews of MTB's 639, 633 and 637 laboured with old pieces of bunting and red, white and black paint to produce Nazi battle ensigns. The time-honoured naval ruse of a false flag was their only hope. And that, even the optimistic leader of the expedition, Lieutenant Stewart Gould, thought a slim one. He and

his two commanders—Lieutenant Henry Butler and Lieutenant George Russell feared that German spotters would surely recognize the unmistakable lines of a British MTB.

The three tiny ships slipped out of Sousse harbour and arrived off the German shore line exactly at daybreak. Just half a mile away the look-out saw a powerful coast-defence battery. But the Germans on the beach only waved. On the MTB's the British white ensigns remained furled at the yard-arms, ready to be broken out the moment the ships went into action. Their swastikas whipped smartly in the wind.

The ships cruised slowly through the Gulf of Hammamet, past Nabeul, examining each little cove. Still the Nazis waved from the beaches, while the MTB commanders charted every camouflaged gun position and tent hidden in the bushes.

They were nearing Kelibia Point, the place from which the Axis would probably launch their evacuation, and Gould had been told to find out about the capacity of the piers that were being constructed. Powerful guns frowned down on him, any one of which could have blasted his ship into eternity with one shell. But for half an hour he and his consorts cruised about, while the officers filled their notebooks, and Nazi soldiers, not more than a few hundred feet away, feverishly worked on the piers.

Round the point at Kelibia was the principal anchorage for German warships and supply vessels. Gould decided to have a look. The harbour was defended by batteries of six-inch guns—a fact neither Gould nor Admiral Cunningham knew at the time. Not a shot was fired, however, as the three boats chugged quietly into the roadstead and dropped anchor. For half an hour, Gould and his officers spotted gun emplacements, radars, storage depots, ships, ammunition dumps and troop concentrations.

Only a few hundred yards away, German and Italian officers kept looking at them through field glasses. There was a bad moment when the big guns of a near-by battery began to swing in their direction. But the Nazi gunners were only testing their traverses.

The grim muzzles swung right on past them. German prisoners later revealed that everyone had thought the MTB's were German E-boats cleverly disguised to resemble British vessels.

Gould, his map-making finished, calmly weighed anchor and moved deeper into enemy territory. Every few minutes an enemy plane would streak over them. But the Messerschmitts, never suspecting that Allied ships would snoop round Axis harbours in broad daylight, didn't even bother to take a good look.

By 9.30 a.m. Gould was sixty miles behind the enemy's lines. He had found out everything that Admiral Cunningham wanted to know. But there was still the matter of "opening the sea lanes," that the orders called for. He was trying to decide how to begin, when he spied two Italian mine-sweepers in a small cove. A German convoy escort ship lay near by. Directly behind them, on shore, was an important-looking factory.

Gould signalled for battle. On three diminutive masts, the swastika disappeared and the cross of St. George whipped out. For twenty minutes, at 300-yard range, the MTB's raked the sweepers and the escort vessel with two-pounder shells, pom-poms and machine-guns. Those shells that missed the ships crashed into the factory behind. The Axis crews, too startled to resist, scampered overboard.

The sweepers quickly went to the bottom. By the time the larger boat had been set ablaze, Nazi pilots were running to their cockpits at near-by airfields. But Gould was on his way home before they got going.

He went back the way he had come, shooting at everything that looked interesting. The two-pounder shells made little impression on the coastal airfields, though their moral effect was devastating. The German command, thinking that a large-scale raid was brewing, hastily ordered troops to the shore and more planes into the air.

And then, after shooting down an observation plane that probably would have caused him great trouble, Gould ran into

something important. Scattered along the beach were a number of huge German transport planes, remnants of a 100-plane Axis air convoy which had been shot up once before. Some had crashed but quite a few were intact. Within easy range, Gould's gunners destroyed every one.

Gould could have gone home then with honour, but just as they came abeam of Kelibia Point, MTB 639 made a signal. "Intend to close and bombard." Butler in the 633 and Russell in the 637 stared as their leader's ship began to swing. "Lord lumme," said one of the helmsmen, in an awed voice, "we're going to be bloody 'eroes." He was right.

About a mile off-shore was a sizeable enemy merchant ship, guarded by two destroyers, an umbrella of fighter planes and 6-inch coastal batteries. With the signal "Full speed ahead," Gould began one of the most brazen attacks in naval history. He had worked out the tactics for such a situation with Butler and Russell the night before.

Gould's 639 headed for the destroyers, to draw their fire while 633 and 637 manoeuvred into position to torpedo the freighter. It took twelve minutes to do that, and in those twelve minutes all hell broke loose.

A bare second after Gould had opened fire on the leading destroyer, with his comparatively ridiculous pop-guns, the Nazi warships began to blast with four-inch salvoes. The six-inch shore batteries opened up. A moment later anti-aircraft guns, their barrels depressed to sea level, joined in. Fighter planes dived in groups of twos and threes to pump cannon shells and machine-gun bullets into the outrageous little ships.

The incredible happened. "Get that destroyer's bridge," yelled Gould to his gunners over the din of bullets and shrapnel beating against the armour plate of his diminutive conning tower. And within a few minutes the destroyer began to withdraw, seriously damaged. Dodging waterspouts that threatened every few seconds to engulf it, 639 laid a smoke screen between the second destroyer

and the other two MTB's, while they got set for their deadly business. Less than a 1,000 yards from the Nazi merchantman, Butler sent his two torpedoes plunging into the water. A moment later Russell's torpedoes were under way. There was a deafening explosion and the Nazi ship literally jumped out of the water—in tiny bits.

"Withdraw," came a signal from 639. But Butler and Russell hesitated, for 639 was on fire. On its bridge lay Gould, his right side sprayed with machine-gun bullets from face to knee. A few feet away his second in command was dead, killed instantly by a shell-burst. His first lieutenant, John Hayden, was running the ship, with a bullet in his back.

Six-inch shells churned the sea as Butler and Russell came alongside their stricken flagship, to take off Gould and his crew. "'Alf a mo'," roared the 639's coxswain. "There's a midshipman below wot's got it." And while the rescue ships patiently waited in the inferno round them the coxswain fought his way through smoke and flame and back again. "'Ere 'e is," he yelled triumphantly. The midshipman—half his left hand blown off and his jaw shattered by bullets—managed a smile through the blood.

As the last of 639's survivors were brought aboard the other two MTB's, forty Axis fighters struck. But they were cheated again. Dodging and weaving, their decks loaded with dead and wounded, Butler and Russell made for Sousse. Even the wounded cheered when one of the gunners sent a Focke-Wulf flaming into the sea. Then a squadron of Allied fighters roared over and cleared the sky of enemy planes.

"Pretty good show," said Lieutenant Gould, shortly before he died an hour later.

Condensed from Saturday Night, Toronto

The Savage Recruits from Burma

By Ralph Henderson

"WHEN WE volunteered for 'hazardous service,'" the bearded young American captain told me in Burma, "we didn't know we were coming out here, and we certainly had never heard of a tribe called Kachins. Well, we know a lot about them now. The best damn jungle fighters in the world. It's lucky they happen to like us."

The American-Kachin Rangers did their fighting *behind* the Japanese lines. They had been ahead of General Wingate in February 1943, an advance screen when he led his Chindits in the first spectacular strike deep into Burma. Ahead of General Merrill in early 1944, guiding his "Marauders" on their 750-mile jungle march to seize the Myitkyina air strip. Ahead of the Ledo (later the Stilwell) Road, as its engineers came crashing through the mountains to build a land route to China. Ahead of General Willey's "Mars Force" in the operation which shook loose the last Japanese grip on the North Burma mountains.

Action enough, perhaps; and yet that is only a small part of the story of the men who went behind the Japanese lines to make contact with wild tribesmen, and of the strange results of that fighting partnership.

"The first signing up," continued the captain, "was rather like joining an exclusive club. Officers were looking for candidates in the training camps. They would tap you for a little talk: 'Would

you like to see some quick action—hazardous, of course?' 'Are you pretty good at taking care of yourself?' And then a question that made you think twice: 'Are you willing to make a parachute jump behind enemy lines—alone?'

"I got my first hint as to where I might be sent when I was called in and asked to make a list of things I would want if I should find myself *alone in the jungle.* Knowing that the army usually gives you about half what you ask for, I made a real list: three revolvers, two knives, two torches, tommy gun, grenades, camouflaged clothes, and so on for half a page. They produced every item on the spot, and said, 'Take it away!' I had to load it all on, and go back to my hotel looking like a one-man commando unit. When I went through the foyer women screamed, strong men turned pale and I felt like a fool. But I learned then and there that this outfit was prepared to let you make a damn fool of yourself in your own way. They gave you what you asked for.

"A few days later I was on a boat, and an officer told me where I was bound for."

The Burma hill country bordering Assam is one of the wildest areas on earth. From a plane it looks like a gigantic green plush carpet flung over a rock pile. From the ground there is usually no view at all, only a sense of sunless, choking vegetation. The few trails used by the hill folk seem to emphasize, rather than relieve, the impenetrability of the endless surrounding jungle.

Along these trails, early in 1942, the Allied forces had made their escape from Burma into Assam. Along them, after that retreat, crouched the Japanese, denying any hope of a return. Every path became the entrance to some little green hell, some secret and well-armed Japanese strong-point.

The Japanese conquest of Burma had, moreover, isolated China by choking off the Burma Road. Unless a new way could be found to send in supplies, China was doomed.

The task of digging the Japanese from the North Burma mountains and securing a route for a supply road nearly 1,000

miles long was handed to General Joseph Stilwell. As one of the units under his command, the American-Kachin Rangers were to play their spectacular part.

On 4th July 1942, a small group had gone ahead to set up the Rangers' headquarters in Assam. There had been only twenty of them at first, a curious little army of eleven officers and nine men. They were a hand-picked group of specialists, including not only experienced army officers but others whose attainments seemed peaceful enough: geographers, linguists, lawyers, even a jeweller (his skill with precision instruments was to prove invaluable in designing tiny, durable radios).

The plan of operations was simple; "mad," some conventional military minds called it. A warlike hill tribe called the Kachins back in the Japanese-held mountains, was known to dislike the Japanese. The plan was for American volunteers to organize the Kachins into fighting units, and supply them with weapons and leadership. From a plane flying at night deep into Japanese territory, an American volunteer would parachute down near a jungle village. A second parachute would carry food, weapons, drugs, a few presents for the natives and a small radio transmitter.

From the moment he leaped (often his first parachute jump) the volunteer would be irrevocably on his own. He must make friends with natives whose language and customs were totally unfamiliar to him. He must make himself their leader and trust them not to betray him for a high reward. Once he was securely established, the night-flying planes would bring him more food, weapons, supplies. And then he could begin his own little war, a campaign of raids and ambushes, against the Japanese.

The plan certainly lacked nothing in audacity. It might have been regarded as foolhardy but for two important facts. First, the country was so wild and densely jungled that there were many remote villages to which not even Japanese patrols had ever penetrated. Second, Kachin refugees had reported that men of their race liked Americans as much as they hated the Japanese.

THE KACHIN warrior, as many soldiers were later to discover with something of a shock, did not fit the romantic picture of the noble savage. He was usually no more than five feet tall, with stringy hair, crooked teeth, and a retiring manner easily mistaken for stupidity. His clothes looked like something given to him, a long time ago, by destitute relatives, and he wisely refrained from washing them lest they disintegrated altogether. There was nothing in his appearance to contradict his history of blood-feuding within the tribe and robbery beyond its borders. The Kachin's taste for blood-letting was hereditary and natural: his fondness for Americans was acquired. It grew out of a bit of history.

IN 1878, when Burma was ruled by King Thibaw, an American missionary named William Henry Roberts sought an audience at the palace in Mandalay. Into the Presence he crept on hands and knees, and bowing his forehead to the floor before the Peacock Throne, as was required, made his plea.

Faraway to the north lived a backward, warlike race known to the Burmans as "Kachins"—"robbers." No traveller was considered safe among them. The missionary sought permission to enter this country. King Thibaw consented. It was no concern of his if a foreigner wished to devote his life, which promised to be extremely short, to his own brand of religious lunacy.

Roberts's labours among the Kachins produced two notable results which were to play a surprising part in the future. First, he won the gratitude of a large number of tribesmen; with a simple and primitive logic, these hillmen extended that friendship to other Americans who followed Roberts, and gradually transferred it wholesale to a great country they had never seen. Second, Roberts gave the Kachins a written language. They had no alphabet of their own, and so he captured the sound of the native words, as nearly as possible, in our own letters, and set up village schools to teach the ABC. Many Kachins learned to read their language in our alphabet. This made it easy to train Kachin radio operators.

THOSE FIRST American volunteers to take the dark leap into the unknown were scared. Scared of being hopelessly lost in the jungle; scared of injury, of snakes, of sickness; scared most of all of being caught and tortured by the Japanese.

"My first jump," one of them told me, "went off all right. I landed safely near a Kachin village, and they found me next day. They were perfectly friendly and gave me boiled rice and eggs. But I knew a Japanese force was near by and I was about ready to cross off my life. You see I didn't know then that you could just hook your hand in the nearest Kachin's belt, and he would take you to some place where no Japanese could ever find you. Perhaps he couldn't understand a word of the few phrases you had tried to learn—it didn't matter. He would hide you, and feed you, and stay with you till it was safe to move again."

The volunteers, at first, were not at all concerned with fighting. They had enough to do in learning to exist in the jungle, in setting up radio communications with their home base, in getting acquainted with the language and customs of their hosts. They familiarized themselves with all the jungle trails in their areas, the roads used by the Japanese, the tiny paths and game tracks which only the Kachins knew. The Japanese were aware of their presence by now, of course; sometimes of their precise position. Japanese patrols would often chase them from place to place, but could never catch them.

The Kachins were joyfully willing to enlist as fighters. Gradually each American organized his own band of tough little warriors, and began to equip a force. The radios reported positions, called for supplies, and the transport planes dropped the packages on mountain rice-field clearings or into secret forest glades. The standard supply was one-third of what would be required for usual army units; Rangers were meant to find the rest themselves.

To the Kachins, stripped of nearly all necessities by the years of war, the bounty from the skies was miraculous: rice, salt (unobtainable in the hills, and valued like silver), medicines, tobacco, lamp oil; machine-guns, rifles and fine jungle knives.

Before long these forces were beginning to make contact with one another, and to infiltrate deep into Japanese territory. They cleared small, hidden landing strips in the jungle, where tiny liaison planes could slip in to take out ill or wounded men. They began to repay their debt to the air force by sending back, alive and well, pilots whose planes had crashed in enemy territory. They caught a Japanese pilot who bailed out almost over his own airfield, and sent him to headquarters; he was a valuable prisoner, the first Japanese officer captured in Burma since the British retreat.

THE MEN who had leaped into the unknown were now experienced campaigners; they had learned a lot about living in the jungle, and about Kachins. Let us take, as a more or less typical example, the experience of the young captain who had made the one-man invasion of the hotel foyer.

About two months after his jump-in, he had been given the word, over the radio, to "start fighting."

"I had a platoon or so of Kachin fighters behind me by that time," he says, "and had picked up a pretty sound idea of the surrounding roads and trails. We began to ambush trails, dynamite bridges and blow up Japanese ammunition dumps.

"In a jungle ambush, the Kachins can do terrible things with sharpened bamboos. They fill the bushes on both sides with needle-sharp stakes, cleverly hidden. When a Japanese patrol was fired upon, and dived for the timber—well, I hardly like to talk about it. After a few ambushes like that, the Japanese never took cover when we fired on them.

"Of course they tried reverse operations on us, and my life wouldn't have been worth a nickel if my men hadn't been about ten times as alert as any Japanese in the jungle. They just seemed to *know* when they were about. I have no idea how they did it, when I myself couldn't see, hear, or smell a thing.

"Only once, in months of hide-and-seek fighting, were we ever surprised. We were going to blow up a bridge, and perhaps we

were too busy with our own ideas. Anyhow, a volley of rifle shots came at us from very close range. How they missed us I'll never know, except that shooting in the jungle is tricky. And what saved us in the next few moments was even queerer.

"The Kachin is a born jungle hunter, and he has never had anything to hunt with but crude home-made muzzle loaders. He always shoots at the closest possible range, and then *runs forward* to finish the wounded animal with his knife. So now, like hunters, every Kachin round me sprinted forward. The Japanese ambushers got confused and jumped to their feet to meet a charge. And then the Kachins dropped down and murdered them with their tommy guns.

"Even so, it wasn't only luck that saved us. The Japanese had rifles; but every Ranger carried a quick-shooting automatic, so that by comparison the fire-power of our small group was overwhelming. We have always tried to give our Kachins the most modern weapons, and they love them. They learn to assemble a machine-gun so quickly it makes your head spin.

"What about all that equipment I chose for my one-man war? Well, I left most of it at base, of course. But a good knife is always very handy. When the leeches are really thick in monsoon time, you can sort of peel them off your legs, like shaving; once they get their heads in deep, you have to use the knife point to dig them out. Rations couldn't always reach us in the jungle, and the Kachins taught me to eat some things not served in the best restaurants. Unfamiliar roots, berries and fruits, of course; but also monkey, tiger and elephant meat. Fried termites and young white baby bees are a bit crunchy, but not so bad. Rats—a nice clean paddy-field variety—are very good indeed.

"In exchange I taught the Kachins a trick I could never master myself—to like emergency rations. One day two of them brought me the container of something they had just finished, and asked when we could get more of this good new ration. I jumped when I saw the red can marked 'Poison'. It was solidified alcohol, 'canned heat.' I was terribly worried for a few hours but they showed no

ill effects except that they were a bit drunk. I began to see that Kachins are not only friendly, but very durable."

Add a few variations to the captain's adventures, and multiply them by several score, and you begin to have a notion of the extent of the operations which chewed up the Japanese rear areas. It was grim destruction on a wide scale behind the whole 600-mile-long Japanese front.

In February 1944, when "Merrill's Marauders," a force of specially trained jungle fighters, struck towards the Japanese base at Myitkyina, the Rangers supplied an advance screen for the column. Three months later, when the Marauders closed in on their objective after a magnificent march, it was a Kachin guide who led them in. The Kachin had been bitten by a poisonous snake that morning, but he refused to be ill until he had taken the troops, by one of those jungle trails which only a Kachin could follow, to surprise and seize the airfield.

The records give other glimpses of individual Rangers in action. There was a boy who had been in the jungle alone for months. He learned to speak Kachin perfectly, and had caught ten elephants from the Japanese. An elephant is extremely valuable because it takes the place of truck and tractor in the jungle.

A sergeant became a specialist in blowing up bridges and even had a troop train to his credit. He walked more than 1,500 miles, mostly over the steepest trails, and lived for long periods on rice stolen from Japanese food dumps.

THE RANGERS were noted for being unorthodox. I met one tall, blue-eyed officer as he arrived from the jungle. He wore a battered hat, unrelated to any uniform ever seen, with a long silver-pheasant feather in it. His fine red beard glinted in the sun.

"That's a handsome feather," I said. "There seems to be something about this organization that makes the men wear feathers. Feathers and odd uniforms."

"Yes," he said, "some of them wear any damn thing." (He

evidently considered himself a model of conventionality.) "Some of them get along with nothing much but boots."

"It's a lonely life," I suggested. "Bound to develop eccentricities after a time."

"Lord, yes!" he agreed. "Of all the crazy bunches! I sometimes think I'm the only man in it who keeps both feet on the ground."

"Wasn't someone telling me that you have become rather interested in Kachin superstitions?" I asked. "Evil spirits, and divination with chicken bones, and that sort of thing?"

"Certainly," he said. "Anyone who has had any real experience with divination is bound to see that it makes a lot of sense. The Kachins use chicken bones to choose a safe trail, for instance; if I had disregarded them, we would have walked into a Japanese ambush more than once. I don't go for all their evil spirits, but it's reasonable to throw a few coins into a river before crossing it."

"Maybe," I said. "But some of the boys really are a bit eccentric?"

"Some of them," he said, "are definitely jungle-happy. Why, I know a fellow who claims he was bitten by Kachin evil spirits. The sores on his legs wouldn't heal until he began to wear little elephant-hair bands below the knee, as the Kachins told him to. What do you think of that?"

"Very odd," I said.

"Certainly we're a mad bunch," said the young commander of the American-Kachin Rangers. "We had one officer—he came over from a British unit—who always wore his monocle on parachute jumps. And another who can't shave, even in the jungle, without a valet to lather his face and hand him the razor. And there is a Ranger who specializes in frightening prisoners into talking. He has an enormous bushy black beard and a scar from eye to chin, like a pirate, and he shaves his head bare—really the most horrible sight in the jungle. Any Japanese he gets hold of begins to babble like a public relations officer.

"But remember, the outfit was hand-picked; for this kind of job we had to have men who would try anything, men who could stand

on their own feet and handle things their own way. Original ideas never hurt anyone; they just make life more interesting."

The main psychological worry was something entirely different. Lonely men could crack up in the jungle. The trees closed in till the men seemed to be fighting for space, for light and air. "You are in a prison," as one Ranger put it. "You are breaking your heart to get out, but you'll never escape——

"The tension becomes unbearable. You are on the wrong end of an eternal manhunt. The Japanese are after you; you can't get free. Sleeplessness—nightmares——

"When things like that begin to happen to a man you can detect it in his radio messages. Then it's time to get him out fast. With a little rest, he'll be ready to go back, more sure of himself than ever."

THE JAPANESE were eventually dislodged from their mountain strong-points and driven south to the plains. The truck convoys began rolling over the completed Stilwell Road on the long pull to China. Many heroic workers and fighters contributed to that victory; indispensable among them and hitherto unheralded, were the American-Kachin Rangers, prodding the enemy from his hidden lair, filling his secret trails with terror and sudden death.

The American-Kachin Rangers made a considerable contribution to the Allied victory in Burma—with very few casualties.

"There is just one explanation for that," says a Ranger officer, "Kachin loyalty, and Kachin jungle-craft. Why, they just wouldn't allow our men to get hurt, and they spotted every Japanese ambush. People asked how they did it; I have never found out. But I do know that we tried out war dogs, specially trained for patrol work. The dogs were wonderful, but the Kachins were keener."

When the Kachin homeland was free of the Japanese the hillmen again planted the rice and the giant cucumbers in their highland garden patches. Along those dim trails they followed the wild boar and the sambur. Their part in one of the most remarkable episodes of the war now has a place in their tribal lore—as it has in ours.

When Hitler Invaded America

By Lawrence Elliott

A LITTLE AFTER midnight on 14th June 1942, Coast-Guardsman John Cullen set out from the Amagansett coast-guard station on Long Island, New York, to make a routine beach patrol. He carried a torch and, from time to time, flicked the beam out in front of him. Still, he could see no more than five or six yards ahead in the swirling fog.

The twenty-one-year-old coast-guardsman was half a mile east of the station when he came upon four men clustered ankle-deep in the surf round a small boat. "What's going on here?" he snapped.

One man, long-faced and speaking with a slight foreign accent, explained that he and his friends were fishermen and that they had become lost in the fog. Cullen was not satisfied. "You'd better come to the station with me," he said.

The long-faced "fisherman" grabbed at Cullen's arm. "Listen, boy!" he said. "Have you got a mother and father? Would you like to see them again? Here, take this money and have a good time. Forget what you saw. Understand?"

Stunned, young Cullen clutched the sheaf of notes thrust into his hand. He was unarmed, and he sensed abruptly that he had stumbled on to something far beyond his ability to cope with single-handed. He backed away, then ran to the coast-guard station.

The long-faced man and his three confederates quickly fell to unloading the rubber boat which had carried them ashore from the

submarine U-202. In a hastily dug trench they buried four waterproof cases, each packed tight with explosives, timing devices and detonators—enough to sustain a massive assault on the core of America's industrial might for two years. And then, even as Cullen pounded towards the old wooden coast-guard station for help, they moved swiftly up the beach road towards the Amagansett railway station. By the time Cullen and two mates had armed themselves and raced back, they found only the deserted beach and the grey haze.

Thus began phase one of Operation Pastorius*—the landing of a German sabotage team on the shores of the United States.

The broad outline of the plot to bring production in key industrial plants to a halt was the work of the *Abwehr*—the intelligence division of the German High Command. The mechanics of the plot were entrusted to a brilliant and choleric intelligence officer, Lieutenant Walter Kappe, who for twelve years had been working on propaganda for Nazi-front organizations in Chicago and New York. Kappe's plan was to recruit Germans who had lived and worked in the United States—men so at home with American habits and language that they could lose themselves anywhere in that country.

Small teams of these men, intensively trained and lavishly equipped, would be landed by submarine. Their targets would be pinpointed in advance. Kappe had convinced himself that they would be abetted by countless German-Americans loyal to the Fatherland. They would maintain contact with Kappe and with each other by coded advertisements in the *Chicago Tribune*. Once the sabotage network was established, Kappe would slip into the United States and take charge from a secret headquarters in Chicago.

WALTER KAPPE began his recruitment in the winter of 1941. It was a tedious chore. He consulted Gestapo lists of recent repatriates. He addressed rallies of the Ausland Institute, organized to recruit Germans abroad into the Nazi Party. He combed the files of the

* So named by the Germans after Franz Daniel Pastorius, the leader of the first group of their countrymen to emigrate to the New World.

Wehrmacht. He interviewed every likely prospect. And finally, on 10th April 1942, the little band of volunteers, soon to be charged with leading the German "invasion," gathered on an estate outside Berlin. Among them were:

George John Dasch, the long-faced man, thirty-nine, eldest of the group, who had entered the United States illegally in 1922, worked as a waiter in New York, and even served for a brief period with the US Army Air Corps before returning to Germany in 1941.

Werner Thiel, who had gone to America in 1927, stayed fourteen years and applied for naturalization.

Edward Kerling, a dedicated Nazi who had worked as a chauffeur and domestic servant in the United States for eleven years.

Hermann Neubauer, a cook.

Herbert Hans Haupt, youngest of the candidates, who had spent sixteen of his twenty-two years in the United States and was an American citizen by right of his parents' naturalization.

Ernest Peter Burger, a Nazi Party member who had worked in the United States as a machinist and served with units of the Michigan and Wisconsin national guards.

Heinrich Heinck, a toolmaker who had lived in America for thirteen years.

Richard Quirin, who had gone to the United States in 1927, then some years later taken advantage of the Reich's offer to finance the return of any German national qualified as a skilled mechanic.

On the afternoon of 10th April, Lieutenant Kappe took his charges on a tour of the estate. Besides a dormitory there were a gymnasium, a classroom and an extravagantly equipped laboratory, a tower for experiments with explosives, and two rifle ranges. Kappe told the group that from that moment they would be lost to the world. No one was to know where they were.

At dawn next morning the rigid routine began: PT; classroom lectures on incendiaries, explosives, fuses, timing devices and secret writing; grenade-throwing, rifle-shooting and wrestling, and practice missions of actual sabotage.

The instructors concentrated on materials which anyone could buy at a chemist's without exciting suspicion. An effective incendiary for instance, could be ignited with the help of sulphuric acid and powdered sugar. A concealed-writing process required only an aspirin tablet dissolved in alcohol: dry, the writing disappeared; rubbed with alcohol-dipped cotton-wool, it showed plainly. Ingenious, and deadly, were the methods of triggering an explosive charge. One needed only a wire-tipped cork floating in a slowly leaking tin. When all the water had seeped out, and the agent had had time to put miles between himself and the target, the cork reached bottom, metal touched metal, and an electrical circuit was completed. This activated the explosion.

In the final week of training, the class was taken to the Berlin railway yards. Experts showed them how a handful of sand thrown into a bearing box would put an engine out of commission, how a small explosive charge, judiciously placed, could block a vital section of track for days. From the yards the saboteurs went on a three-day tour of the aluminium and magnesium plants of *I.G. Farbenindustrie*. Kappe demonstrated how easy it would be: a high-tension wire cut, a transformer shattered by a rifle shot, and the plant's counterpart in America would be powerless for at least eight hours—long enough for the liquid aluminium to congeal and destroy the intricate network of stoves and baths. Result: stagnant weeks while new equipment was being installed.

Final examinations began on 29th April. Sealed instructions directed each team to the site of a mock-up factory, railway terminal or oil tank. After appraising the situation secretly, they were to prepare the proper explosives and, within thirty-six hours, destroy the target.

Examinations over, the successful candidates were promised a monthly income and a soft government post after the war, then divided into two teams and handed their sabotage assignments. Team No. 1, under the leadership of Dasch and including Burger, Heinck and Quirin, was to attack aluminium factories in

Alcoa, Tennessee; East St. Louis, Illinois; Massena, New York; the cryolite works at Philadelphia; and they were to blow up the locks in the Ohio River between Pittsburgh and Louisville. Team No. 2—Kerling in command of Neubauer, Thiel and Haupt—would concentrate on railway bridges and tunnels, blow New York's Hell Gate Bridge into the East River and destroy New York's water-supply system. At every opportunity both groups were to plant bombs in public places to promote panic.

Kappe hammered away at the need to recruit German-Americans. "Work on their nationalistic spirit, on their homesickness," he would say. "Promise them anything. Promise them heaven on earth, but get them to help you." Kappe said something else, too: he ordered each of his charges to kill, without compunction, any of the others who weakened or endangered the mission.

Kappe also made a big mistake.

On the morning of 26th May, two days before the two teams embarked on the U-201 and U-202 from the submarine base at Lorient, he doled out the money which was to finance the venture: 50,000 American dollars to each of the two leaders, and money belts stuffed with 4,400 dollars to each of the others. Dasch was packing his money into a false-bottomed suitcase when he suddenly realized that a substantial part of it was in notes which had been withdrawn from circulation some nine years before. Though the incriminating notes were quickly replaced, a subtle change began taking place in the hearts of the saboteurs. As Dasch has since put it, "I kept thinking about that money. If they could be that stupid, how much did they really care about any of us? What chance did we have?"

HURRYING up the road towards Amagansett on the morning of 14th June, Dasch had fresh reason to worry. Their first mishap—that damned coast-guardsman—had hit them even before they could get their landing boat out of the water.

Dasch was still worrying at 6 a.m., when the booking clerk at

Amagansett opened his ticket window. The four Germans were waiting to buy tickets. "You fellows are up early," the clerk said.

"We've been fishing," Dasch said.

Dasch bought some newspapers and handed them to his confederates. He cautioned them to bury their heads in their papers and say nothing. At 7.30 they boarded the train. In New York they separated, Dasch and Burger booking in at the Governor Clinton Hotel and Heinck and Quirin at the Martinique near by.

They should have been pleased with themselves. They had landed safely. No one had so much as looked askance at them on the train. They had successfully lost themselves in the city. Later, when they got hold of a car, they would dig up their equipment and carry it to a permanent hiding place in the Catskill Mountains, as planned. There was no hurry; Kappe had emphasized that there were to be no overt acts of sabotage until the two teams were firmly established.

Now, however, came the turning point in Operation Pastorius. Precisely why it came about so suddenly may never be determined. As soon as Dasch and Burger were alone in their room, Dasch began to ramble nervously. "Listen," he said. "I'm worried. I want you to tell me how you feel about this thing. I have a plan that will keep us out of trouble here."

"I know what you intend to do," Burger said.

"All right, but if you don't agree, I'll have to kill you—right here and now."

Burger's answer was, "Don't worry about me."

At seven o'clock that evening, an FBI special agent, Dean McWhorter, answered the telephone in his New York office. A man with a slight foreign accent said that he had just been landed from a German submarine and that he had important information for J. Edgar Hoover, head of the FBI. "I will be in Washington within the week to deliver it in person," he said.

It was a little more than six months after Pearl Harbour. The FBI had been besieged with calls from cranks and crackpots. Agent

McWhorter made a memorandum of the mysterious call and went on to other things. But the call took on significance when the coastguard reported to the FBI the happenings on the beach at Amagansett and delivered the cache of explosives which they had subsequently found.

Meanwhile, some 1,000 miles to the south, the U-201, carrying Sabotage Team No. 2, cruised towards the Florida coast. It surfaced off Ponte Vedra Beach, twenty-five miles south-east of Jacksonville, in the early hours of 17th June. A rubber boat was put over the side, and Kerling, Neubauer, Thiel and Haupt rowed ashore. Quickly they buried their equipment. Changing their clothing, they walked to US Highway 1 and waited for the bus to Jacksonville. By next morning Kerling and Thiel were on a train bound for Cincinnati, and Haupt and Neubauer were *en route* to Chicago.

GEORGE DASCH dallied in New York for four days, killing time by playing cards with his waiter cronies from the old days, before he took the train to Washington and telephoned FBI headquarters. "I'm the man who phoned your New York office," he said. "I am in Room 351 at the Mayflower Hotel."

Minutes later he was pouring out his fantastic story to special agents Duane Traynor and Thomas Donegan. He talked for two days. Agents Frank Johnstone and Norval Wills relieved Traynor and Donegan. A fresh shorthand-typist reported to Room 351 every two hours. Dasch's statement, rambling and full of irrelevancies, covered 254 single-spaced typewritten pages.

Among the significant pieces of information, he talked about Kappe and the sabotage training school. He listed the objectives of teams No. 1 and 2, described each man and gave the names and addresses of their most likely American contacts. He described the German civilian and military situations. He revealed that Nazi submarines were operating at an unsuspected depth, well beneath the killing range of Allied depth-charges. Finally, he voiced the hope that, in return for his co-operation, he would be given some

opportunity to make propaganda broadcasts to the German people.

Just about the time that Dasch finished his statement in Washington, FBI agents in New York opened the unlocked door of Ernest Peter Burger's room at the Governor Clinton Hotel and took him into custody. He seemed more relieved than surprised. An hour or so later, Heinck and Quirin, returning to the Martinique from the cinema, found the FBI waiting for them, too.

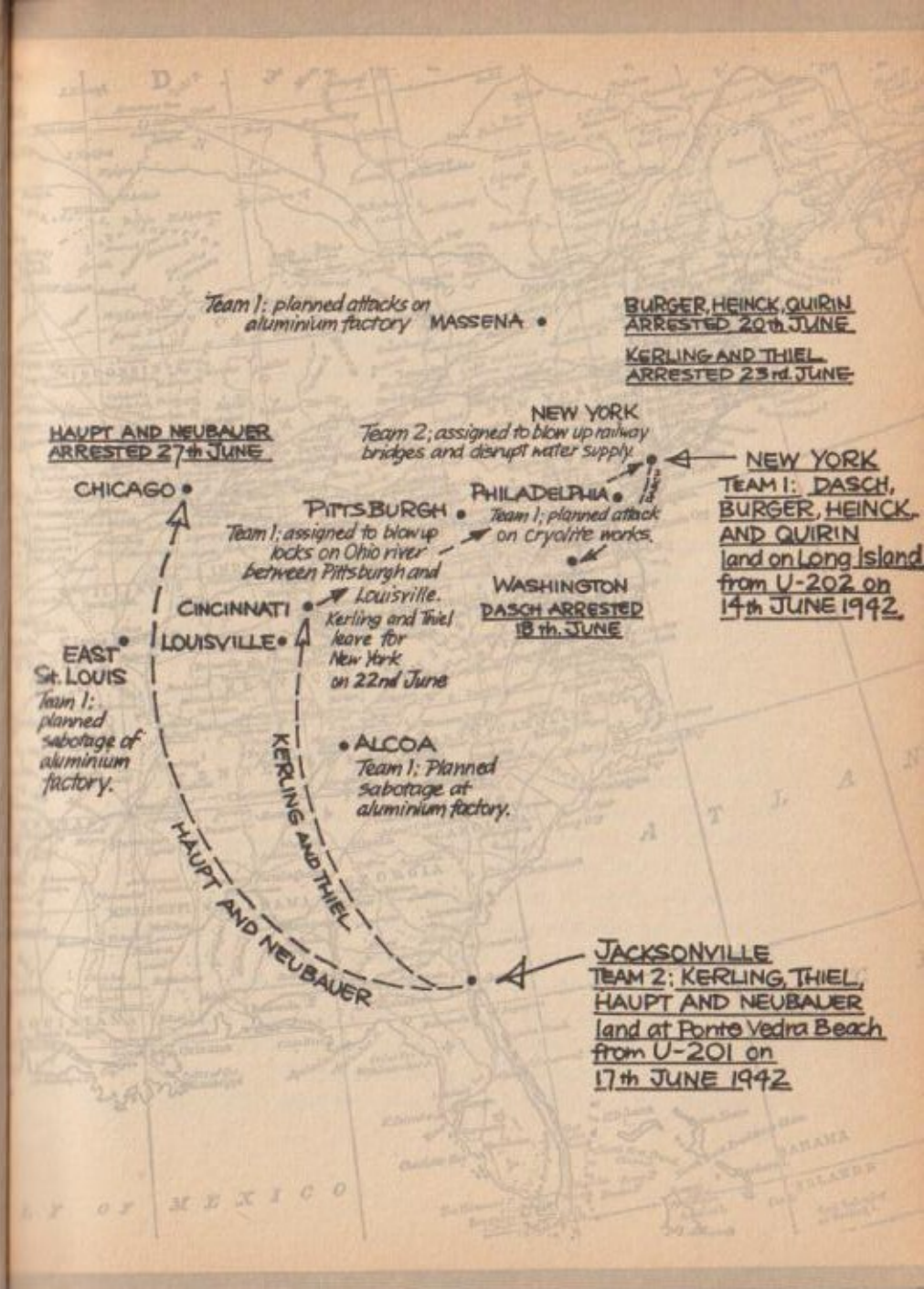
EDWARD KERLING, leader of Team No. 2, had a wife in New York. He went there to see her on 22nd June. The next evening he and Thiel, who went with him, were under arrest.

In Chicago, meanwhile, Haupt had moved back into his old room at his parents' house. Airily confident, he walked into an FBI office one day and enquired about his call-up status. He was told, "There is no problem." There wasn't. The FBI had had him under surveillance for a week, biding its time. Finally, on the night of 27th June, he was arrested—after he had led the FBI to Neubauer, the last of the eight saboteurs.

Five days later, on 2nd July, President Roosevelt appointed a military commission to hear the case. It was the first such tribunal to be convened in the United States since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865, and it was conducted in strictest secrecy.

THE TRIAL began in Room 5235 of the Justice Department Building. Counsel, witnesses, observers and guards were all sworn to secrecy. Top army lawyers, including Colonel Kenneth Royall, later to be US Secretary of War, were named by the commission to defend Burger, Heinck, Quirin, Kerling, Neubauer, Thiel and Haupt. At his own request, Dasch was separately defended—by Colonel Carl Ristine, a brilliant lawyer on wartime duty with the Judge Advocate-General's office.

The trial opened with the evidence of US Attorney-General Francis Biddle, who, with the Army's Judge Advocate-General Myron Cramer, personally headed the case for the prosecution. In addition to the amazingly detailed confession of each defendant,


Team 1: planned attacks on aluminium factory
MASSENA
BURGER, HEINCK, QUIRIN ARRESTED 20th JUNE
KERLING AND THIEL ARRESTED 23rd JUNE
HAUPT AND NEUBAUER ARRESTED 27th JUNE
NEW YORK
Team 2; assigned to blow up railway bridges and disrupt water supply.
NEW YORK
TEAM 1: DASCH, BURGER, HEINCK, AND QUIRIN land on Long Island from U-202 on 14th JUNE 1942.
CHICAGO
PITTSBURGH
Team 1; assigned to blow up locks on Ohio river between Pittsburgh and Louisville. Kerling and Thiel leave for New York on 22nd June
PHILADELPHIA
Team 1; planned attack on cryolite works.
WASHINGTON
DASCH ARRESTED 18th JUNE
CINCINNATI
LOUISVILLE
EAST St. LOUIS
Team 1: planned sabotage of aluminium factory.
ALCOA
Team 1: Planned sabotage at aluminium factory.
KERLING AND THIEL
HAUPT AND NEUBAUER
JACKSONVILLE
TEAM 2: KERLING, THIEL, HAUPT AND NEUBAUER land at Ponte Vedra Beach from U-201 on 17th JUNE 1942

he introduced the explosives they had brought with them. He conceded the Germans' queasiness once they had set foot on US shores. But he underlined the fact that only the FBI's sure-handed work in rounding them up kept at least some of the group from carrying out their destructive missions. Were all to be freed because one or two lacked the will to proceed?

The defence hinged on a single issue, and a remarkable one it was: that the Germans had not committed a single act of sabotage—*nor had they ever intended to!* They were, at most, tepid Nazis who had volunteered for Operation Pastorius only because they hoped thereby to get safely out of Germany and back to friends and relatives in the United States.

One after another, Lieutenant Kappe's pupils trooped to the witness stand to affirm their secret distaste for the Hitler régime. Burger elaborated on difficulties he had had with the Gestapo. He reminded the commission that his confession had included information of great value to the United States: detailed descriptions of his confederates; the workings of the saboteurs' hidden equipment; the construction and layout of the U-202.

The high point of the trial was the appearance of George John Dasch. The long-faced man was a nervous, pugnacious, rambling witness. He argued with his own counsel as well as with Attorney-General Biddle. He denied that he had surrendered because of the realization that he was flirting with execution as a spy. He had from the beginning, he said, planned to give the mission away. He hated Hitler and everything he stood for.

The prosecution bore down. Had the FBI promised him anything in return for his co-operation? Indeed it had, Dasch answered. Agent Donegan had told him that if he made a full statement and pleaded guilty, he would probably be free in six months. Why, then, asked the prosecution, had he pleaded not guilty? The answer: a guilty plea would have marked him a traitor in Germany, and his family there would have suffered brutal consequences.

Special agent Donegan now gave evidence. The truth, he

testified, had been somewhat abused by the defendant. The FBI had promised Dasch nothing. They had only outlined the courses of action which were open to him. (At the time, they had expected the trial to be held in open court. It was the *not guilty* plea which would have exposed to the Germans Dasch's aberrant role in the case. If he had entered a guilty plea, it would have been unnecessary for him to give evidence.) The FBI made another point. Why, if Dasch planned to betray Pastorius, had he waited until 19th June to surrender to the authorities? In those five vital days the United States lost a prime opportunity to trap the U-201 off the Florida coast as it put Team No. 2 ashore.

In reaching a verdict, it is not unlikely that the commission asked themselves questions such as: Was it logical—or even reasonable—to assume that in a first-class military power like Nazi Germany, the best men the *Abwehr* could produce for so delicate a mission were the likes of Dasch, a neurotic malcontent, and others equally unstable? Or was this all part of the false façade, the carefully rehearsed attitude the plotters would adopt if they were captured?

Summing up for the prosecution, the Judge Advocate-General addressed the eight officers of the commission thus: "To accept the version of the defence, gentlemen, is to conclude the defendants came here not as invaders but as refugees."

On 8th August the defendants heard the findings of the commission approved by the President: each was guilty of violating the laws of war. Dasch was sentenced to thirty years in prison, Burger to life. For the others: death in the electric chair.

In April 1948 President Truman granted Dasch and Burger clemency. Both were transported to West Germany.

What did the seizure of the invaders do for the United States? As a result of heightened vigilance and the constant surveillance of suspected enemy sympathizers, not a single case of enemy-directed sabotage succeeded in America throughout the war. This was the consequence of what might have been the most spectacular sabotage triumph of modern history.

Scarlet Pimpernels of the Air

By Allan Michie

IN TEMPSFORD, a little town in Bedfordshire, there was a road marked "Closed to the Public." The villagers knew it led to an airfield, but the airmen who drank in the local pub were under threat of court-martial if they talked of their job. A few miles away at Harrington, Northamptonshire, some 3,000 US airmen operated another secret airfield. Even administrative officers and ground-crew men were not told what was going on. When they asked why the B-24 Liberators were painted black, the reply was "for night pathfinding operations."

From these fields two RAF special mission squadrons and the American 492nd Bomber Group took off on missions that caused many of Hitler's troubles in occupied Europe; they delivered arms, ammunition, radio sets, thousands of carrier pigeons, food and sabotage equipment to the undergrounds of Europe. For the Norwegians they dropped skis and sleighs; for the French Maquis, jeeps, bazookas, mortars, bicycles and tyres—made in Britain but with French trade-marks. These Scarlet Pimpernels of the air transported hundreds of Allied spies, underground agents, saboteurs and resistance leaders to and from occupied Europe under the very noses of the Gestapo.

The two RAF squadrons which began operating from Tempsford in February 1942 made their drops in nineteen countries from the Arctic Circle to Africa; the Americans dropped 4,500 tons of

equipment and hundreds of agents into Europe between January 1944 and the end of the war.

In the operations rooms at Tempsford and Harrington, huge wall maps showed a tiny flag for each drop reception-ground and landing field in Europe. There were thousands of flags, from the tip of Norway to the remotest corner of Austria. Hundreds clustered round Paris, Oslo, Copenhagen, Brest and Brussels. There were drop areas even in Germany—outside Berlin and Hamburg and in the Bavarian mountains. Throughout the war Allied agents parachuted down on them.

In 1942, when Reinhard "The Hangman" Heydrich, ruthless Gestapo boss of Czechoslovakia, was murdered while driving near the Czech village of Lidice, which the Nazis obliterated in reprisal, the world wondered where the killers had come from. They were, in fact, Czech parachutists who the night before had taken off from Tempsford.

During the last weeks of Germany's fight, Allied columns were pushing with apparent recklessness deep into the Reich. But the Allied commanders knew just what they were doing. Intelligence men dropped by the special air squadrons kept telling them exactly where the Germans were. And when the German radio was still boasting of a last-stand fight to be made in the Bavarian mountain "redoubt," the Allied commanders knew the redoubt was a myth. Dozens of agents who had been dropped into the area reported that there was no such redoubt.

In preparation for the D-Day landings, the Allied Supreme Command determined to build up a huge backlog of sabotage materials in *Festung Europa*, and bomber squadrons, experienced in long navigational flights because of their anti-submarine work, were chosen for the new assignment. The aircraft were painted black, the waist guns were yanked out to give more space for packages, and a circular opening—known as the "Joe hole"—was cut in the floor through which to make drops.

A complex chain of organization linked the airfields, the London

Coded messages in BBC news broadcasts to Europe gave information and instructions to Europe's Resistance workers. Douglas Ritchie, known as Colonel Britton, was the official broadcaster of the Supreme Allied Commander's messages

headquarters, and underground hideouts all over Europe. Local resistance leaders selected the reception fields—usually farmlands or sports grounds—and sent the location by secret wireless or by pigeons to an obscure building in a drab London street. There the reception fields were given code names, such as "Bob," "Percy," "Luke." Often reconnaissance aircraft would zip across and photograph the field and surrounding landmarks. When the field was approved, another coloured flag blossomed on the huge wall maps at Tempsford and Harrington, marked with the dates when underground men would be standing by to receive drops.

If a Maquis leader asked London for supplies or arms, a plane was loaded with steel canisters and wicker baskets, with parachutes attached. That evening, a BBC announcer would say, over the air, "Henri has found two francs." That meant the drop would be made at reception field "Henri" at about two in the morning.

Few reception fields had secret radio to guide the planes in. Most

drops were made into a box-like formation of torches pointed upward by waiting Maquis. Sometimes the Germans built fake drop areas but they seldom received the cargo because they couldn't give the correct torch signal. Often German radar would spot the plane and night fighters would attack it. Two night fighters set a Liberator on fire and wounded the tail gunner and radio operator, but the plane staggered home to Harrington, where more than 1,000 bullet holes were found in it.

The agents dropped were a varied lot, British, American and other Allied officers, French-Canadians, anti-Nazi Germans, young boys, girls and old men. On the afternoon before their flight they were brought to the secret airfields by car. Intelligence men searched them thoroughly—a London bus ticket, an American cigarette, would give them away on the Continent—and then dressers took over. Each agent was clad in a baggy suit abundantly fitted with pockets into which went a dagger-like knife, concentrated rations, a torch, a first-aid kit, bundles of radio parts, secret maps and papers. One agent even stowed away a gramophone record denouncing Laval, which was to be slipped into a Vichy radio programme. A rubber cushion was placed in the seat of the suit and rubberized cloth was wound round the agent's feet. Knee-high boots and a rubber crash helmet completed the rig. The agent by now looked like a lumpy mattress.

Approaching the drop zone, the agent would slide along the floor to the "Joe hole" and on a light signal from the pilot would drop into darkness below. One German was dropped five times, once dressed as a German colonel, again as a lieutenant, later as a corporal and twice as a civilian.

Since the underground needed more material than could be dropped by parachute, it was decided that heavy planes carrying large loads must land behind the German lines. Flying antiquated single-engined planes which could land on a 150-yard strip of rough ground, RAF pilots had already been putting down and taking off from France with a couple of agents each trip; larger aircraft were

a bigger problem. RAF pilots practised with Hudsons until they could land in 450 yards and the Americans decided to use Dakota transports. A month after D-Day, Colonel Clifford Heflin set his Dakota down in a half-harvested wheat field in southern France. The waiting Maquis quickly uprooted trees and replanted them round the plane so that it was invisible to the Germans, and forty-eight hours later, after having been wined and dined, Colonel Heflin took off for Harrington with two American airmen, a Canadian gunner, an RAF navigator, a British agent, a young French girl and a Frenchman to attend a sabotage school.

When a Hudson became bogged down in a French field, enthusiastic Maquis mustered 200 men, ten oxen and four horses and in four hours had the big plane on firm ground. An American Dakota nosed over while landing in France on a torchlight flarepath. Mechanics were flown over from Harrington and in a few days had the plane serviced for the return trip.

The leader of the Danish resistance movement told the flyers at Tempsford that ninety per cent of the arms and equipment dropped was reaching underground hands and being put to immediate use. The agent in the Lyons area was brought out to Harrington to tell the Americans that in the previous month his Maquis had killed 1,000 of the enemy with the arms dropped from the air.

On a plain granite memorial near the French village of St. Cyr de Valorges is carved this inscription: "In memory of five American airmen found dead under the debris of their aircraft, shot down in flames at this place April 28, 1944, whose mission was the parachuting of arms to our secret army for the liberation of France and the restoration of our ideal." That simple monument to five unknown warriors of the Anglo-American special air squadrons will stand in history as a symbol of the gratitude of the free peoples of Europe for their help.

Condensed from Skyways

The Silent, Invisible War Under the Sea

By Ira Wolfert

THE BATTLE of the Atlantic was war under the sea unlike any that ever had been before—secret, nearly invisible, only faintly heard, and then at second hand, through its echoes.

Blind men groped for each other with rays. They fumbled for each other's throat with slide rules and graph paper. They turned dials, pushed buttons, prayed at frosted glass windows, humbled themselves imploringly before earphones, while at a large console a single note and its overtones—the immortal *ping*—were composed into a symphony of death by a man with a musician's ear.

Then, at the end of hours, or days, or a week, there was usually no climax to the symphony, just a drifting off into silence. If there seemed to be a little oil on the surface, an apparatus known as an "oil thief" would be thrown over the side so that chemists might ascertain whether the U-boat was dead. Sometimes there was a playful, bubbling gurgle, a kind of watery death rattle, and then fatal vomitings from the bottom—up-bobbing wreckage. The wreckage would be collected carefully, including pieces of men.

The undersea warfare seemed often much more like a patient experiment than a battle. Indeed it was largely a battle of the laboratories—to counteract the enemy's devices, to counteract his counter-actions to our devices, to produce new devices.

An example: the acoustical torpedo. The acoustical torpedo was one of the weirdest weapons of the war; a forerunner of post-war

guided weapons. While the rockets and the bombs were just big explosions, the acoustical torpedo had a fiendish little brain sitting up in its warhead. It "homed" on noise. The German submarine skipper had only to launch it in the general direction of a ship and the whole wide field of sound of a ship's propellers became an awful kind of vacuum-cleaner sucking the torpedo out of the sea and into the ship. The torpedo seemed to snuffle through the water like a dog on the scent of a rabbit. Whatever turn the ship made, the torpedo could turn better; whatever speed, it could go faster. Once it got its nose caught in a little whimper on the edge of the field of sound it was sucked deeper and deeper into that field until at last it rammed unerringly for the ship's panting heart.

The acoustical torpedo had the further devilish talent of being able to pick out the biggest target in a convoy. When a small ship was travelling within range of a larger one, the torpedo would circle hastily as if sniffing and then lunge for the larger and noisier ship.

Allied experts came up with fourteen answers to the acoustical torpedo in a brief number of hours.

The idea of all of them was, as one admiral put it, "to make more noise where you ain't than where you is."

However, the laboratories could provide only part of the answer. Men in battle had to do the rest. A whole new tactic of defence had to be evolved and special skills developed to use the noisemakers. For example, there was always the danger that an acoustical torpedo circling in the trap of a noisemaker would hit another ship in the convoy by accident. Another example: experts could pass the torpedo from noisemaker to noisemaker until it cleared the target area.

On the German side there was the race against British and American radar and the elaborate sonar devices with which the *ping* was evolved into a symphony of destruction. The *ping* was an underwater sound wave; when it struck a solid object it returned an echoing *ping*. The Germans spent a long time trying to develop a rubber for coating their submarines which would absorb the *ping*.

They did get a rubber so sound-absorbent that men in a room lined with it could not understand each other's words. Then they developed a glue to fasten the rubber on to their submarines. German workmen got some of the glue on the soles of their shoes. They tore the soles from the uppers trying to free them from the U-boat hull. The rubber and the glue were wonderful—but still the *ping* kept echoing back to the last day of the war. The *Pillenwerfer*—an underwater gun to shoot chemical pills giving off a noise that bent and agitated the *ping*—was a more effective counter.

Allied radar drove the Germans mad. The first answer they tried was the "Flying Dutchman"—a cross between a helicopter and a kite. It was attached to a drum in the conning tower. The U-boat made speed into the wind to send the kite aloft. Once airborne, an engine-driven horizontal propeller kept it up. The pilot had a walkie-talkie. There were two things wrong. The first was that the pilot was so busy keeping his Flying Dutchman aloft he did not have much time to keep a look-out. The second was that there was no way to retrieve him hastily if he spotted an aircraft and the submarine had to crash-dive. Generally he was just cut loose to fall helpless into the sea. This made him a morale problem.

The Germans then came up with radar decoy balloons. These were hydrogen-filled and had tinfoil strips on them to reflect radar waves. They were attached by about thirty yards of catgut to a sea anchor. An expert radarman, seeing on his screen a pip that travelled with the wind and at about the wind's speed, could guess it was a decoy. But nobody could be sure. It might be a submarine crafty enough to travel with the wind and with the wind's speed. So these balloons had nuisance value right up to the end.

The Germans' radar could pick us up no sooner than ours would spot the submarine, and then things became like a brawl in a western film where both sides draw simultaneously. So the Germans evolved a "search receiver" with which they could detect the location of a radar set several miles farther away than the radar could spot them.

Then the Allies sent to war a new kind of radar—the S-radar. A

feeling almost of panic spread through the Nazi fleet. Their search receivers couldn't detect the S-radar. The Germans had tried to develop a detector using infra-red rays and they thought that where they had failed we had succeeded. For six months they barked up this wrong tree, developing a paint to coat their submarines that would make them invisible to infra-red rays. Meanwhile Nazi skippers were afraid to use their search receivers or radar, and ship sinkings fell steeply. Eventually the Gestapo, in a spy raid in Rotterdam, found a set which broke the secret.

The Germans made three revolutionary developments in undersea warfare, each one of which was designed in turn to seal victory.

The first of these was the Wolf Pack. Submarines on patrol made rendezvous until they outnumbered the escort vessels of a convoy. Then they lunged.

Aircraft were the British-American answer. Heavy land-based, radar-equipped bombing planes drove the Wolf Packs out from both shores of the Atlantic, where the pickings were thickest. But then the packs clustered in mid-Atlantic, out of land-plane range, and made their kills.

Escort carriers were the answer to that. They were sent out to pick up a convoy as it drew out of range of the land-based air cover.

The first baby carriers scored hysterical successes. They took the Nazis by complete surprise and found submarine crews feeling so secure that they were using the middle Atlantic as their private beach for sun bathing and swimming. A crash-diving submarine is helpless before an aircraft in the seconds before a relatively safe undersea level is reached.

The initial Nazi reaction to the baby carrier was an incomprehensible error so profound that, our own men said, it cost the Germans the battle. In panic and with Teutonic stubbornness, they decided the submarine should fight it out with the aircraft.

Admiral Doenitz called in all the submarines and bristled them with AA guns. Yet in six months in 1943, 150 Nazi submarines were sunk and the back of the Wolf Pack was broken. And all the

time the Nazis had the answer to their problem sitting right in front of their nose—the escort carrier itself, lying helpless for at least three hours out of every twenty-four as it launched and took on its planes. They never made a successful attack on a baby carrier until the closing months of the war.

THE GREAT victory of the little flat-tops was not won easily. Thought, skill, and willingness to die to make a kill went into it.

A long campaign of trial and error was endured before the ideal attack by an aircraft against a submarine was developed. The most minute instructions were drawn up. An enormous variety of skills were required of pilots and their crews, from radar and sound-gear reading to the astute reading of the enemy's intentions in the last moments of the attack.

Example: On 15th April 1943, an Allied patrol aircraft, at the end of its tenth hour on watch, stumbled on a German submarine. When the plane was still half a mile off, the submarine made a crash-dive. There was no time for correct tactics. The pilot just threw himself on the submarine, making a sixty-degree dive from 4,000 feet. He disabled the submarine, forcing it to the surface, and kept harrassing it in the face of its ugly anti-aircraft fire until a second plane from the squadron could come up and destroy it. Then, with fuel running low, he photographed the enemy survivors swimming in the sea and flew more than 300 weary miles back to his base. There were no medals waiting for him there. Instead, there was a chilly critique of his unorthodox methods which concluded: "While there is no denying that the attack was effective, the end attained should not be permitted to obscure the means employed."

In other words, do it our way, or don't do it at all. And this policy paid off in reducing our casualties and in increasing our kills.

THE GERMANS were not out of the war just because their undersea blitz was beaten. Aircrews began to report seeing something like a wastepaper-basket moving through the Atlantic, leaving a slight

white wake and sometimes a little smoulder of smoke. Thus the dread *Schnorchel* made its appearance in the battle.

The Achilles' heel of submarines had always been their batteries. They had to operate on batteries when submerged, and after about twenty-four hours would have to come to the surface to recharge. When surfaced they were vulnerable. With the *Schnorchel*, the U-boat could use its engines under water and need not surface to recharge batteries at all. In one stroke, the *Schnorchel* tripled the submerged speed of the submarine, stripped the aeroplane of about eighty per cent of its efficacy as a counter weapon and made radar all but useless.

The *Schnorchel* was an extensible diesel air vent, a tube fitted with a valve. The diesels discharged their fumes through the tube into the open air while the submarine cruised at periscope depth of thirty-five to forty feet. The valve prevented water splashing in.

The Germans found the idea on two Dutch submarines captured in 1940, but they began their experiments with it eighteen months too late. Nazi troubles in perfecting the *Schnorchel* were numerous. Crews got ear-ache from the fluctuations it caused in air pressure. In heavy seas, the strain on the crew was almost unendurable because keeping exactly the proper depth was so difficult. This fault they never cured. Stoppages were frequent. Submarines filled with smoke. The U-269 had to return from patrol after five days because its entire crew had acute diarrhoea from the fumes. Exhaust fumes entering the diesel compartment often caused severe carbon-monoxide poisoning. The Nazis gave engine-room personnel larger shares of fruit and milk, and stuck to their experiments.

In the end they had something. The *Schnorchel* operated noisily, making it easier to detect the submarine by sonar, and its noise hampered its own sonar operators. But it might have won the battle if our own sonar gear had not kept a step ahead.

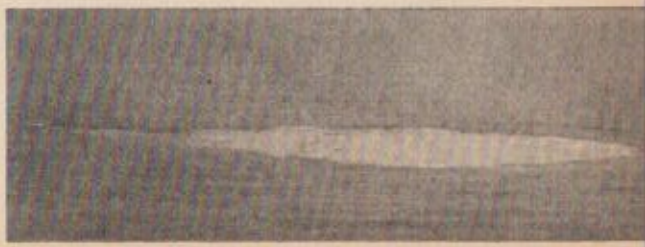
Our laboratory men could make sound gear so sensitive that conversations within German submarines on the bottom could be overheard. However, there was a point of diminishing return. The

U-boats (above) were the scourge of the Atlantic

Top right: Depth bombs from a Sunderland aircraft find their mark, and bring a U-boat to the surface (right)

Their U-boat sunk, survivors wait to be picked up

Oil and bubbles mark the spot of another victory in the Battle of the Atlantic



world under the waters is a busy and noisy one, and equipment too sensitive, while very fine in a laboratory, at sea would pick up so many disturbances that no ear could unscramble them.

A more valuable gadget was the expendable sonic buoy. An aircraft would drop it into an area where it suspected the presence of a submarine. The sound gear on the buoy would pick up the submarine and an automatic radio sender on the buoy would broadcast the sound to the aircraft. So that the plane, no longer an effective U-boat killer, took over work radar used to do.

During ten weeks after D-Day, U-boats with the *Schnorchel* and the acoustical torpedo sank twelve merchant vessels. But twenty-nine U-boats were known to have been destroyed, many others were probably destroyed, and even more were damaged.

The last great U-boat offensive of the war then died. We were just too good for them.

This is beautifully illustrated by the story of the sinking of the U-546—a classic struggle in which almost every device and tactic known to both sides was used.

THE U-546 WAS one of six submarines which put out into the North Sea on 19th March 1945. Information available led to the deduction that as a last desperate Hitler gesture these submarines were planning to buzz-bomb America's shores. The whole Atlantic fleet girded itself against them.

At first the only work that could be done was on charts spread out on drawing-boards in the tiny, crowded office of Atlantic Command. There men who knew all about U-boats and Nazi skippers imagined what *they* would do if *they* had command of these six submarines. The problem was not new to them. Once these same men had tracked a Nazi U-boat blockade runner all the way from Japan through the Pacific and into the South Atlantic by hypothesis alone and, still working by hypothesis, had ordered a ship to the point where they believed the submarine to be. The ship came back with the Nazi's scalp.

This time nobody was taking such a chance. Four escort-carrier groups and four supporting-killer groups were ordered to throw up a barrier against the six submarines along the line that appeared in purple—purple for estimated, green for known—on the chart.

Nazi submarines throughout the war gave themselves away by reporting to Berlin almost daily. Admiral Doenitz knew very well that our radio direction finders thus located U-boats, but insisted on the radio reports nevertheless—perhaps because the Nazis never trusted anybody, not even their own. These six submarines, however, used their radios charily. Once they asked a German submarine farther west for a weather report. Direction finders were on them immediately and it was noted with satisfaction that the green X lay within a mile of the purple X. But mostly the tracking had to be done for more than three long, wearing weeks by hypothesis.

Then on 11th April a plane from the *Croatan* saw a low, thin trail of smoke apparently from a *Schnorchel* and on 15th April two submarines ran head-on into the barrier placed across their path. Both were sunk. On 22nd April a third submarine was sunk and at 1.22 that afternoon another submarine was sighted by an aircraft seventy miles from the destroyer escort *Pillsbury*. Its killer group was ordered to proceed to the scene at twenty knots. A search continued all night and into the morning of 24th April, when at 0829 hours the destroyer escort *F. C. Davis* radioed: "We are going to investigate possible contact astern of us." The ships on the line slowed to five knots while the *F. C. Davis* investigated.

Exactly eleven minutes later, a torpedo broke the *F. C. Davis* in two and the battle was on.

A torpedo is a venomous weapon. Of the 179 men and thirteen officers aboard the *F. C. Davis*, 105 men and ten officers died. The *Hayter* turned to the rescue. She fished out sixty-five men unconscious, half-conscious or shaking helplessly from their dip in the frigid water. Lieutenant Edward Keyes alone rescued twelve men and retrieved three bodies, jumping into the water and towing the helpless to the side of the ship. Eight men on the ship gave

artificial respiration for hours. Richard Bumgarner revived three men who were believed dead, working unflaggingly despite the heavy rolling of the *Hayter*. He laboured over one for three consecutive hours, refusing relief because he knew the importance of maintaining a rhythm.

MEANWHILE all the other ships of the force were sticking long, quick, sensitive ears into the wild world under the sea where the submarine lay. And from the loudspeakers above the consoles poured sounds like those of a city.

"The production of sound," says a naval instruction book, "is apparently nearly as common among the fish and crustacea of the sea as among insects and other animals on land." Singing fish and drum fish are notably gossipy. Certain prawns snap and crackle like bacon frying, loudly and continuously. The rush of porpoises and whales through the water produces a "hydrophone effect." A croaker chorus is like the roar of a machine shop.

But what the sound gear sought was the *ping* and other sounds that would identify the echo as having bounced from a submarine's hull.

Thirty-seven minutes after the *F. C. Davis* had been hit, the USS *Flaherty* picked up the submarine, and the line of searchers held still while a few of their number gathered for the kill. The *Flaherty* was ordered to make an ahead-thrown attack, the *Pillsbury* to manoeuvre to pretend it was the real attacker.

Ahead-thrown attacks were made by contraptions which spread under-water missiles in one of two patterns, the hedgehog or the mousetrap. Unlike depth charges which detonated at a set depth, the missiles exploded only on contact, and so they made no noise under water unless they meant it. The sonar crew usually lost contact in the roar of a depth charge, but could keep contact throughout an ahead-thrown attack.

At 0950, wham! the *Flaherty* fired. There was a crack, a hurtling, gasping sound, a splash, the suck and sigh of missiles plunging down below the surface—and silence. Men held stop watches

accurate to a tenth of a second to time the explosion and so get the depth of the submarine, but there was no explosion.

The attack had failed because this was no ordinary submarine; its skipper knew every trick of his trade and he used them all. He knew how the bubbles of a wake distorted and weakened sound waves. So he circled round and round in the water in which he lay to make a whole area of wakes. He ejected air slugs from his torpedo tubes. And when a *ping* banged his hull, he jammed the ship's sound gear by *pinging* back. He was expert at throwing out a "knuckle." A knuckle was an area of disturbance in the water caused when a submarine made a sudden burst of speed and a sharp turn, and it returned an echo when *pinged*. He would run right under the enemy ship so that the *ping* could not follow him. Nor was he fooled as to which ship was making the attack. He could hear the K guns fired and could hear the depth charges slapping the water.

Finally, he had a thorough mastery of the temperature gradients of these waters. All German submarines carried charts showing the sound conditions to be expected in different areas. A temperature difference of as little as nine degrees Fahrenheit deteriorates the echo. A submarine skipper can dive into or beneath a temperature gradient as a soldier dives into a trench. He pulls the layer of cold or warm water over him like a blanket and lets the enemy whistle.

This submarine skipper even used the temperature gradients to stalk his attackers. But our ships were respectful of him. They, too, had men on board who were masters. The ships walked across the water like cats on wet grass, finically, and when the German did fire his acoustical torpedoes, they were set for him with their noisemakers. However, the musical saw-like sound of the noisemakers drowned out the *ping*, and contact was lost.

Contact was lost more than a dozen times, but always regained.

The fight lasted all day and into early evening. There were more ahead-thrown attacks, depth-charge attacks and creeping attacks during which formation was kept so tight that there was a real danger that the side-thrown charges would land on our own ships.

The first consequential damage to the submarine was done two hours after the attack began. The terrific concussion of the explosives loosened her up until water began to leak in at numerous points, but the damage-control crew managed to block them off. Conditions gradually worsened during the day. Then time began to run out for the Germans. Violent manoeuvres had nearly exhausted the ship's batteries. She had shipped so much water that it was necessary to use the main bilge pumps. The noises from the pumps made the hydrophone ineffective and the skipper could not tell what was going on above. It was while the hydrophone was ineffective that the U-546 came to its end. A direct hit caused a major leak and cracked the battery cells. Chlorine gas killed all the personnel in the forward part of the U-boat in a few minutes.

This was past eight o'clock in the evening. The *Flaherty* had fired a hedgehog. The *Pillsbury* had noted an underwater explosion. Four minutes later a small oil slick had come seeping up like a gout of blood. Ten minutes later a big bubble blew into a balloon and burst and there was a seethe of small bubbles. The *Flaherty* fired another hedgehog.

2036 hours—from *Varian*: "He's surfacing. Stand by guns!"

At 2040 hours the sub broke water and the *Pillsbury* opened fire with its main battery and 40-mm. guns while other ships fired as they could. The Nazi survivors found the conning tower so badly damaged they had to escape through the diesel-room hatch. The *Schnorchel* had enabled the submarine to remain submerged continuously from 21st March to 9th April. But it had not saved it from its fate nor did it save the last two of the six U-boats. They were dispatched in succeeding days.

IN THE CLOSING days of the war the German fleet had a submarine that could dive to 700 feet and make the hitherto incredible speed of fifteen knots while submerged. It came too late to have any effect and was not invulnerable. It was comparatively blind when at great depths and it still had only limited underwater endurance.

I was Monty's Double

A condensation of the book

By M. E. Clifton James

The wiry little man who won the Battle of Alamein was an inimitable general. But a lieutenant in the Royal Army Pay Corps *looked* very like him. . . . The incredible story of one of the most successful hoaxes of the war is related here by the actor who played the part

London: 1944

I Was Monty's Double

ONE LATE spring morning in 1944 the phone rang at my desk in the Royal Army Pay Corps office in Leicester. "Lieutenant James?" a pleasant voice said. "This is Colonel Niven of the Army Kinematograph section." I recognized the voice of David Niven, the film star. "Would you be interested in making some army films?"

"Yes, sir," I answered, "I most certainly should."

"Good. "See if you can come up to London for a film test."

Slowly I replaced the receiver. Had the army had a lapse into sanity? I had been an actor for twenty-five years, so when the war broke out in 1939 I volunteered my services as an entertainer. Instead I was given a commission in the Pay Corps where I was a complete misfit. Now perhaps the mistake was to be corrected.

A letter followed, and I went up to London in high spirits. At the Curzon Street address he had given me, David Niven greeted me cordially, then left me with a man in civvies who introduced himself as Colonel Lester.

"James," he said, "I am a member of MI5, and I'm afraid I've got rather a shock for you. You are not going to make any films. You have been chosen to act as a double for General Montgomery."

I knew that I looked like Monty. My friends had frequently commented on the striking resemblance. And my photograph had once appeared in a national newspaper, posed in a beret and

captioned: "YOU'RE WRONG—HIS NAME IS LT. CLIFTON JAMES." But this assignment was a poser.

Colonel Lester studied me silently for some moments. Then he explained the plan.

D-Day was now imminent, he said. We had built up a mighty invasion force which would soon land in France and battle its way to Berlin. It was impossible to conceal this build-up from the Germans, and they could probably guess where we intended to strike. But they did not know the date of the expected attack, nor could they rule out the possibility of a surprise blow on some other front. Hence a plan of deception had been formulated and approved by General Eisenhower. The idea was to pile up evidence that Monty—probable commander of the British Invasion force—had left his post in England for a different part of the world. To do this I, after some hasty training for the part, was to *become General Montgomery.*

"You must not breathe a word of this to anyone," Colonel Lester warned me. "Any questions?"

I shook my head. Either I would have to ask several dozen or none at all.

After the interview I had a nightmarish feeling of stage fright. I had been a private in the last war and still had a schoolboy fear of senior officers—the idea of my impersonating the greatest of them all was grimly comic! From then on, however, I was allowed no time in which to brood.

DURING THE NEXT few days I studied newspaper photographs and watched newsreels of Monty. Colonel Lester and two of his junior officers drilled me in hundreds of details of the impersonation. And the need for secrecy was drummed into me so persistently that at first I was afraid of talking to anyone at all. "I want you to look on this as a play we are producing for the benefit of the enemy," Colonel Lester said. "Our audience is not simple. We have to hoodwink the German High Command."

As further preparation for my role, it was arranged for me to

General Montgomery—and his double (right)

MAYfair 9400/319

The War Office, A.K.1(b),
Curzon Street House,
Curzon Street,
LONDON. W.1

B.O.(D.N.) DN/RS

21 April, 1944.

Lieutenant-Colonel David Niven offers Clifton James "a part in a forthcoming production"

Dear Clifton-Jones,

Colonel Lister arrived back today and brought all the photographs and particulars which you were kind enough to give him.

I have a part in a forthcoming production which I think would suit you admirably. However, I must ask you to make a few tests before we mutually decide that you and it fit each other. It would therefore be necessary for you to come down to London for at least one week as soon as possible.

In order to speed up this arrangement do you think you could arrange with your Commanding Officer on the strength of this letter to allow you a week's unofficial attachment here while we are making the tests? If we ask for you officially for only one week through the usual channels it inevitably takes about a month to arrange, by which time the picture would be finished!

If your C.O. would like this done through the usual channels then I will, of course, set the creaking wheels in motion. However, the production is of the greatest importance and urgency, and has been ordered by the Chiefs of Staff. If the tests are successful we should require your services for a few weeks longer, and would, of course, make official application for the additional time.

Would you let me know as soon as possible if and for which dates you have been able to arrange this week's absence from your unit with your Commanding Officer.

I am writing on behalf of the Director of Army Kinematography.

Yours sincerely,

David Niven.

Lieut.Clifton-Jones,
Army Pay Corps,
Newark Street,
LEICESTER.

Lieut.Col.
A.D.A.K.

spend several days on Monty's immediate staff where I could study him at close quarters. To avoid inviting suspicion or awkward questions, I was posted there in the guise of an Intelligence Corps sergeant. Only two members of the staff were in on the plot.

The first morning after I reported with my strange IC sergeant's uniform and credentials, I found myself in a jeep directly behind the general's Rolls-Royce. At dawn our line of vehicles, each exactly five yards apart, drew up before a country mansion near Portsmouth. There followed a five-minute wait of unmistakable tension, whereupon, at exactly timed intervals, Monty's immediate subordinates began to appear; and after they had each inspected us with ritualistic precision, Monty himself came out.

The general looked exactly as I had imagined him. He was wearing his famous black beret and a leather flying jacket, and I noted that he had his own special salute—a slight double movement of the hand that made it more of a greeting than anything else.

When the line of cars took off, my driver kept the regulation five yards behind the Rolls. I kept my eyes glued on Monty. As we sped along the country roads, the few people who were about at this early hour stopped and stared. Then suddenly recognizing the general, they would grin delightedly and wave wildly, receiving in return that friendly salute.

Monty missed no one. Once when we passed a farm labourer, the old chap looked a bit taken aback by Monty's smile and salute. Here was the man who would lead us to victory: Monty, the man in whom every man, woman and child in Britain was placing his trust for the coming invasion. Taking off his battered hat the old man slowly waved it.

When we came within sight of the sea a marvellous spectacle met my eyes. I was attending a full-dress rehearsal of D-Day. Off-shore, as far as the eye could reach, were battleships, cruisers, destroyers and other ships. Huge landing craft were disgorging tanks, armoured cars and guns by the hundred. Overhead the air was thick with planes, while infantry poured ashore from invasion barges.

After conferring briefly with the other chiefs of Allied Command who were watching the operation from an hotel roof, Monty reappeared, and at once a small procession formed behind him. I slipped into place behind them, and as I watched him I forgot everything else. He strode along dominating the scene, but never interfering unnecessarily. Every now and then he stopped and fired questions at officers, NCO's and privates—checking up, offering advice or crisply issuing orders.

What personality he had! The moment he appeared, before he even spoke, it hit people bang between the eyes. He would have made a fortune on the stage, I thought.

Some of the infantrymen plodding up the beaches from the landing craft were still seasick, although they tried valiantly not to show it. Monty's dislike of illness either in himself or in others was well known. One very young soldier, whose rifle and equipment must have been like ton weights, came struggling along gamely trying to keep up with his comrades. Just when he got level with us he tripped and fell flat on his face. Half sobbing he heaved himself up and began to march off dazedly in the wrong direction.

Monty went straight up to him and with a quick friendly smile turned him round. "This way, sonny. You're doing well—very well. But don't lose touch with the chap in front of you."

He put his hand on the boy's shoulder and carefully adjusted his pack, which had slipped.

When the youngster realized who it was that had given him this friendly help, his expression of dumb adoration showed the magical degree of confidence Monty inspired in his troops.

I LEARNED a great deal about the general during the next few days. He was strictly a non-smoker, a teetotaller, and a fanatic on physical fitness. When Colonel Lester once telephoned him to ask if there were any peculiarities about his diet that I should know, he snapped, "Certainly not. I take no milk or sugar with my porridge. That's all." At meals he chatted gaily about birds, beasts and flowers

and quietly pulled his officers' legs if he found them ignorant of natural history. I never once heard him refer to the war.

As I followed Monty round from day to day, I watched him like a hawk, trying to catch his fleeting expressions. I observed his characteristic walk with hands clasped behind his back, the way he pinched his cheek when thinking, his sudden movements, his manner of eating and his habit of throwing out one hand as he hammered home a point. Finally I was confident I could take him off, as far as voice, gestures and mannerisms went. But, with my natural timidity, would I ever be able to imitate his unique personality, to radiate the feeling he gave of strength and quiet confidence? I very much doubted it.

As a final step in my study of him, I was given a private interview with the general. He was sitting at his desk, writing, but he stood up with a smile when I came in. He was an older man than I, but the likeness was uncanny: it was like looking at myself in a mirror. There was no need for false eyebrows, padded cheeks or any other kind of artifice.

He quickly found common ground between us to put me at ease—I had been brought up in Australia, he in near-by Tasmania. As he talked, I listened carefully, trying to record the incisive, rather high-pitched voice and the way he chose his words. He never used high-flown phrases; some people have even described his speech as dry and arid.

"You have a great responsibility, you know," he said before I left. "Do you feel confident?"

When I hesitated, he added quickly, "Everything will be all right; don't worry about it." And at that moment, such was his ability to inspire confidence, my qualms vanished.

AT THE War Office a few days later, I felt an air of tension.

"Now, James," said Colonel Lester, "it's time for the curtain to go up. Tomorrow evening at 6.30 you become General Montgomery. You will be driven to the airport and, in full view of scores

of people, will take off in the Prime Minister's plane. At 7.45 next morning you land at Gibraltar.

"We have spread rumours all along the African coast that Monty may be coming to form an Anglo-American army for an invasion of southern France. You are going to travel all through the Middle East to give weight to these rumours. Every move of yours will be watched intently by Hitler's agents.

"We can tell you more or less what to do, but things never work out exactly as planned. You must paddle your own canoe. Always take command of the situation. Remember: from now on senior officers are mere subordinates. If crowds cheer, it is only your due."

Next day the heavy feeling of Zero Hour hung over me as I donned my full general's battledress, and the famous black beret with its Armoured Corps badge. But Colonel Lester seemed satisfied with the effect when I reported to him for inspection.

"There's just one last thing," he said, and handed me some khaki handkerchiefs marked with the general's initials, B. L. M. "Drop these about as if by accident wherever you think fit. In this game it's the little details that count."

He gripped my hand hard, wished me luck, and went away. Quickly I set my beret at the correct angle and, followed by Brigadier Heywood and Captain Moore, my two personal ADC's, I led the way downstairs.

Outside were three army cars. A crowd had gathered round the one which flew Monty's pennant. A cheer went up when I got in, and as the car moved off and I gave them a brilliant Monty smile and the famous Monty salute, I heard shouts of "Good old Monty!" I smiled and saluted until the muscles of my face were stiff and my arm began to ache.

At Northolt Airport there were more crowds, and near my plane stood a formidable array of high-ranking officers, some of whom knew Monty intimately. My heart was pounding like a piston, but with a violent effort, I stepped briskly out of the car, smiling a little. Followed by Brigadier Heywood, I slowly walked along the ranks

of the senior officers, inspecting them, while they stood stiffly to attention. Then I went over to the crew of the aircraft.

"How are you, Slee?" I asked the pilot. "D'you think we shall have a good trip?"

We exchanged a few words about the weather reports. Then, after inspecting the air crew, I went up the gangway, turned to give everyone a final salute, and at last entered the plane, greatly relieved to have got through the first scene successfully. (I later heard that none of the brass hats who saw me off had any suspicions about my identity; one of them who knew Monty well remarked that the old man looked very fit but a bit tired.)

NEXT MORNING the plane landed at Gibraltar and the curtain went up on another scene. In the background rose the famous Rock. Before me stood two groups of officers and a line of cars. Among the usual airport crowd were some Spanish workmen—several of them known enemy agents. I heard Brigadier Heywood saying, "Let as many people see you as possible," and then the doors of the plane slid open. I stood there for a moment; in the dead silence I gave the Monty salute, then walked briskly down the gangway.

After the welcoming ceremonies I was driven through the streets of Gibraltar while crowds of Spanish civilians watched. There were more crowds at Government House when we drew up there. A guard of honour presented arms, and General Sir Ralph Eastwood—Governor of Gibraltar, and an old friend of Montgomery's—smiled and held out his hand. "Hullo, Monty, it's good to see you again."

I had been thoroughly briefed for this meeting, and knew that Monty always called Sir Ralph by his nickname.

"How are you, Rusty?" I said in Monty's breezy tones. "You're looking very fit." I took him familiarly by the arm as we walked in.

Sir Ralph led me into his study, looked down the corridor, then shut the door carefully and in dead silence just stared at me. Then a smile spread over his face and he shook me warmly by the hand.

"I can't get over it," he exclaimed. "Why, you *are* Monty! For a

few moments I thought he must have changed the plan and decided to come himself."

I was ushered to my room and ate breakfast there alone. Afterwards I stepped idly to the window. Happening to glance upward, a slight movement on the roof of the adjoining building caught my attention. A workman was perched there and was pointing something which looked very much like a rifle straight at me.

I had a very bad moment, but when I looked more closely I realized that my fears were exaggerated. The man was not aiming a rifle; he was trying to examine me through a thin telescope!

An officer now conducted me again to the study where Sir Ralph explained the next moves. "Twelve minutes from now, you and I will take a walk in the gardens behind the house. Two prominent Spanish financiers, acquaintances of ours"—his eyes twinkled, "I would hardly describe them as friends—are calling to look at some ancient Moroccan carpets we have here. By pure chance, they will meet you as they pass through the gardens on their way in."

Presently he glanced at his watch and led me towards the gardens, remarking, "I haven't enjoyed myself so much since I was a boy."

THE SUN blazed down from a clear sky as we strolled slowly between the flower beds, stopping at intervals to discuss some point of horticulture. Turning down a side path we faced the left wing of the house and I saw that a party of workmen, on scaffolding, was repairing the walls. One of them was staring at me intently, but when I caught his eye he at once looked away and went on with his job. I recognized him as the man who had earlier peered at me through the telescope.

We continued our stroll until suddenly the heavy iron gates of the garden clanged. Two men were coming towards us down the centre path—clean-shaven Spaniards both in their late thirties and dressed in dark suits.

"Don't be nervous, James," Sir Ralph whispered hoarsely as they drew near. "Just keep your head."

Pretending not to notice the two strangers, I began to talk about the War Cabinet and "Plan 303." The governor touched me on the arm as if to caution me and I broke off abruptly, registering surprise at their approach.

Sir Ralph greeted them cordially and they bowed in the Spanish manner. I was introduced, and both of them stood looking at me with evident awe and respect. I was polite but aloof, and as I spoke I kept my hands clasped behind me in Monty's characteristic manner.

One of the Spaniards, who looked as sinister as any spy in thriller fiction, kept his snake's eyes fastened on me, while the other pretended to be interested in what Sir Ralph was saying; but I noticed that at odd moments his eyes travelled over every inch of my figure. Both listened with ludicrous intentness to my babble of talk about the weather, the flowers and the history of Government House.

When I judged they had seen enough of me I said briskly: "Well, I only hope the weather holds, I have a lot more flying in front of me." And I half turned away.

At once they took their leave of me, and Sir Ralph ushered them into the house. It was all over very quickly, and yet in that brief space of time the fate of those two spies and perhaps of many thousands of our soldiers was profoundly changed.

As I heard later, these Spaniards were two of Hitler's cleverest agents, Gestapo-trained. As a result of MI5's carefully circulated rumours, they had been given faked papers and false names in Berlin, and had then hastily entered Spanish society as bankers, and had taken up residence in Gibraltar—all for the express purpose of spying on me. They had also planted two underlings; one, posing as a workman, had been employed on the buildings of Government House; the other, a Norwegian, got a job at the airport. All four spies were to file separate reports giving every detail that they had observed. I was to meet the Norwegian again later.

The Spaniards must have worked extremely fast. Two hours after they left Government House, Hitler's representatives in Madrid had the news that General Montgomery had arrived in Gibraltar

and was proceeding to Africa by air. Soon Berlin received the frantic appeal: "At all costs discover nature of Plan 303. Have you any information? Very urgent." And at once the German counter-espionage department ordered its men to concentrate on this problem.

MY DEPARTURE from Gibraltar was very much like my arrival. Bayonets flashed in the sun and a flight of Spitfires came over the airport, dipping their wings in salute. When the usual formalities were over I took Sir Ralph by the arm and we strolled up and down by the airport canteen: for it was here that the Norwegian Gestapo agent was employed. Near the open canteen window I began faking an intensely preoccupied and urgent military discussion.

"Now about these harbour defences, Rusty," I said. "I've told the PM that C4 is perfectly safe. But I want the naval end tied up so that the armour can be shipped without any time lag." Then, pointing across the bay, "If we take about three o'clock right of the cape, the engineers can alter it to fit Plan 303."

I continued in this vein, all of it arrant twaddle, and at one point I could almost swear the governor gave me a suspicion of a wink.

My next stop was Algiers, where carefully planted rumours were circulating that Monty was arriving on an important mission—perhaps to form an Anglo-American army for invading the south of France. At the airport I was greeted by members of General Wilson's staff, after which I made the usual inspections. Near by, a big polyglot crowd of civilians, lured by the calculated leaks about my "top-secret visit," were waiting to catch a glimpse of Monty.

Among them were two Italians, ostensibly pro-Ally, but known to be employed by the Gestapo, and a mysterious French major who was their immediate boss. The major had turned up in Algiers the week before, posing as a member of the French Intelligence; but, as our people knew, he was really an ace enemy agent. Almost immediately he had expressed a desire to meet Monty if he should come to Algiers, and a meeting was now arranged.

Before we left the airfield, the French major was introduced to me by a colonel on General Wilson's staff. I have seldom met a more sinister-looking man. With his glittering dark eyes, his pale face across which ran a livid scar, and his cruel mouth, he looked capable of anything. I couldn't help watching his movements suspiciously, lest he be planning to shoot me. But we merely shook hands and exchanged polite greetings without incident.

An American colonel accompanied me into Algiers from the airport. When we entered our car, the beautiful blonde driver, who wore a marvellously cut US Women's Army Corps uniform, saluted and at once asked for my autograph.

Having foreseen just such an emergency in my contacts with autograph hunters, Colonel Lester had provided me with photographs of the general signed in Monty's own hand. Without a smile—for Monty's aversion to women in the theatre of war was well known—I handed one of the photos to the WAC, remarking coldly, "I hope this one will do."

As long as I live, I shall never forget that drive from the airport to Algiers. My American escort had been warned that an attempt might be made on Monty's life, and as no troops could be spared to guard the twelve-mile route, it was decided to drive hell-for-leather and hope for the best. So we shot out of the airport like a stick of rockets and, with sirens screaming, maintained a headlong pace all the way to Algiers.

All through this hectic drive I kept up a Monty conversation with the colonel—who, of course, was in the know—for the benefit of our lovely driver. I was relieved when we finally turned through large gates and pulled up before a white stone mansion, General Wilson's headquarters. As its doors closed behind me, the curtain came down on another completed scene.

THE NEXT few days passed in a sort of recurring dream—landings, official receptions, guards of honour, bogus talks on high strategy; crowds of civilian spectators, no doubt with enemy

agents among them and endless streets lined with cheering troops.

I had dreaded most of all the prospect of meeting high-ranking officers, since I could not hope to keep up a conversation on highly technical military affairs. But MI5 had planned my tour so cleverly that I always took my meals in private and was carefully prevented from meeting officers (except the few who were in on the plot) who were likely to know the general personally. I was, however, continually thrown in the path of enemy agents.

I remember Brigadier Heywood bringing up one of them, an elderly civilian whose goatee, shabby black suit and big sombrero made him look like a broken-down tragedian.

"Excuse me, sir," Heywood said, "Professor Salvadore X—— would take it as a great favour if you would allow him to pay his respects. As an archaeologist he is, of course, famous. And he's a loyal Italian," he added, seeing my dubious expression.

For a moment I wondered why I should waste my time talking to an archaeologist. But I knew that Heywood had been with MI5 for many years, that he had been specially chosen for this ticklish job, and that he never did anything without good reason. So I exchanged a few words with the Professor, and when he had bowed himself out of my presence and withdrawn a few yards I turned to Heywood and began a rather loud discussion of cryptic military plans.

But neither I nor the MI5-trained Heywood could meet every exigency with aplomb—as I discovered in another North African town where my main task was to talk with a certain Frenchwoman. Her husband, Heywood told me, had worked with the Resistance Movement in Paris, but had fallen into the hands of the Gestapo. They had then arrested his wife and given her the choice of working for them or of knowing that her husband would die slowly in prison. The unhappy woman had with extreme reluctance accepted the first alternative and was now operating from Algiers.

When she was introduced to me I saw a tall, dark, well-dressed woman of about fifty with a face the colour of wood-ash. In keeping with Monty's attitude to women, I greeted her politely but curtly.

We exchanged a few formal words and I could see that her nerves seemed strained to the breaking point. Suddenly her self-control snapped. Hysterical sobs shook her whole body and she began to denounce the war as the work of the Devil and me as one of war's high priests. It was most embarrassing, and not knowing how to answer her I turned abruptly aside while Heywood gently led her away. Apparently the terrible conflict between her patriotism and her desire to save her husband had unhinged the poor woman's mind.

This was the only time that I saw Heywood disconcerted. Neither of us ever spoke of the incident again.

As the days went by I slipped into my role so completely that to all intents and purposes I *was* General Montgomery. Even when alone I found myself playing the part.

Once just as we were about to land at an airport, Heywood asked, "How are the nerves?" In the precise Monty tone I snapped: "Nerves, Heywood? Don't talk rot!"

"Sorry, sir," he replied with a perfectly straight face.

At the end of a week, I returned to Algiers knowing that I had carried out my task without any serious mishap. So far as we knew, nobody had doubted that I was General Montgomery.

D-Day was now only a few days away and my job was done. I drove up to General Wilson's headquarters in a final blaze of glory, changed back into my lieutenant's uniform and was quietly smuggled out of the back door. My likeness to the general had now become an embarrassment, for until the invasion was actually launched there was always the danger that my secret might leak out. So the following afternoon I was stealthily put on a plane to Cairo—the only city near by which was big enough to swallow me without a trace—and kept there under cover until after D-Day.

For a long time I wondered how useful my efforts had been. Not until after the war was I told how the deception had helped to mislead the enemy, drawing away Rommel's armoured divisions, and so contributing to the success of the invasion.

I also learned later how potentially dangerous the mission had

been. When the news of Monty's intended journey to the Middle East first reached Berlin, the German High Command had ordered my plane to be shot down *en route*; or, if this plan miscarried, for Monty to be assassinated somewhere in Spain or Africa.

But at the last moment the Germans decided to make sure that I really *was* Monty; and when they had satisfied themselves on this point, the Fuehrer intervened to save my life. Hitler ordered that Monty was on no account to be killed until they discovered just where he was intending to launch his invasion. And this (apart from the cross-Channel invasion) the Germans never did discover.

On my own drab and inconspicuous return to England after D-Day, the plane I travelled in stopped at Gibraltar. While we were waiting for transport to our overnight billets there, our motley collection of Service passengers converged on the airport canteen.

As I leaned against the counter I heard a voice with a foreign accent: "Please? What can I get you, sir?" I looked up and saw a middle-aged man with white hair, very bushy eyebrows and piercing grey eyes.

Noticing the foreign accent, a naval rating remarked, "You're a long way from 'ome."

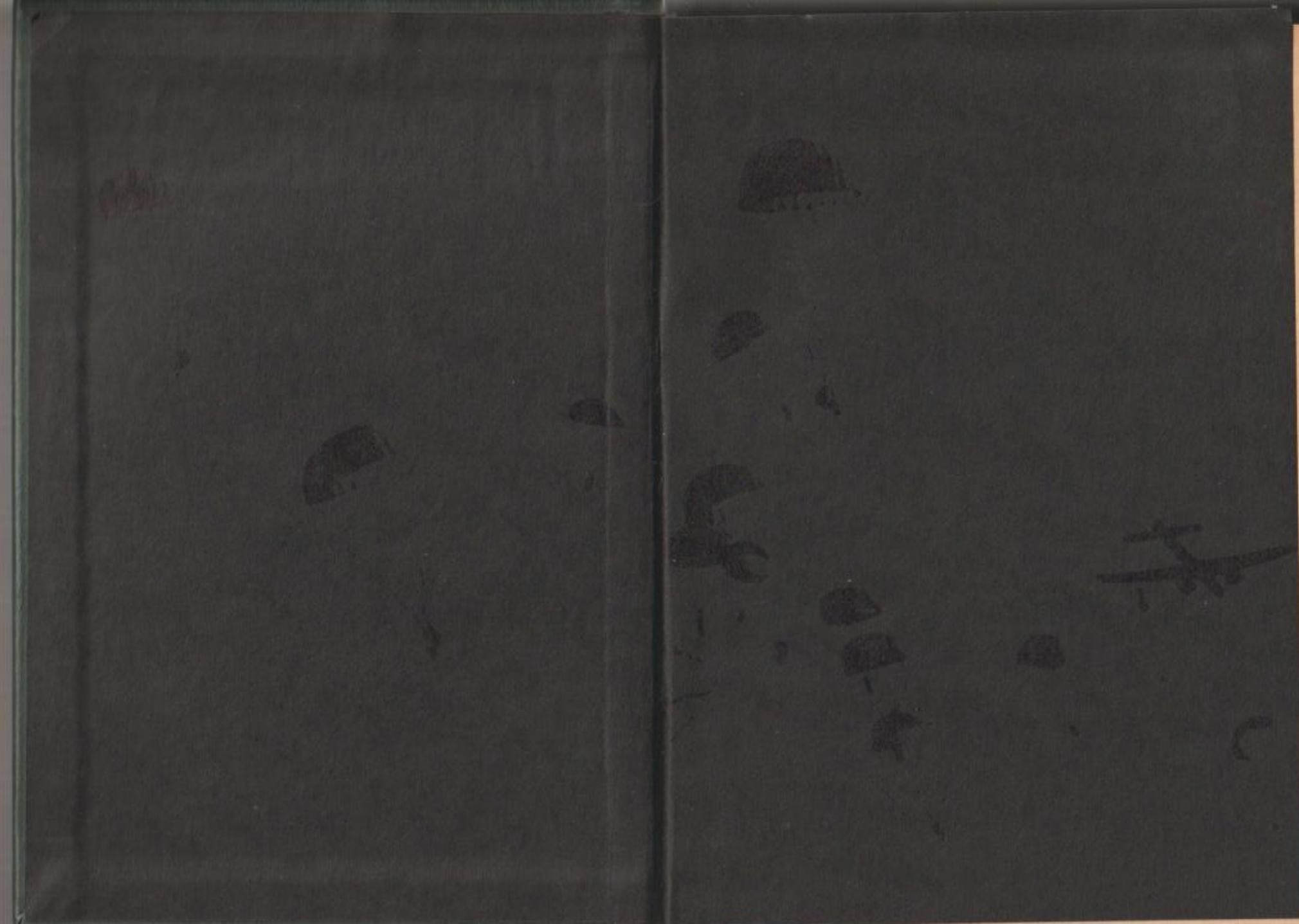
"Many miles," was the reply. "I am from Norway."

Something connected up in my tired mind and I turned quickly away. I had recognized the Norwegian enemy agent I had been at such pains to delude. I wondered what he would have said if I had asked him how Plan 303 was going.

Condensed from "I Was Monty's Double," published by Rider and Company, London

2

SECRETS AND STORIES OF THE WAR



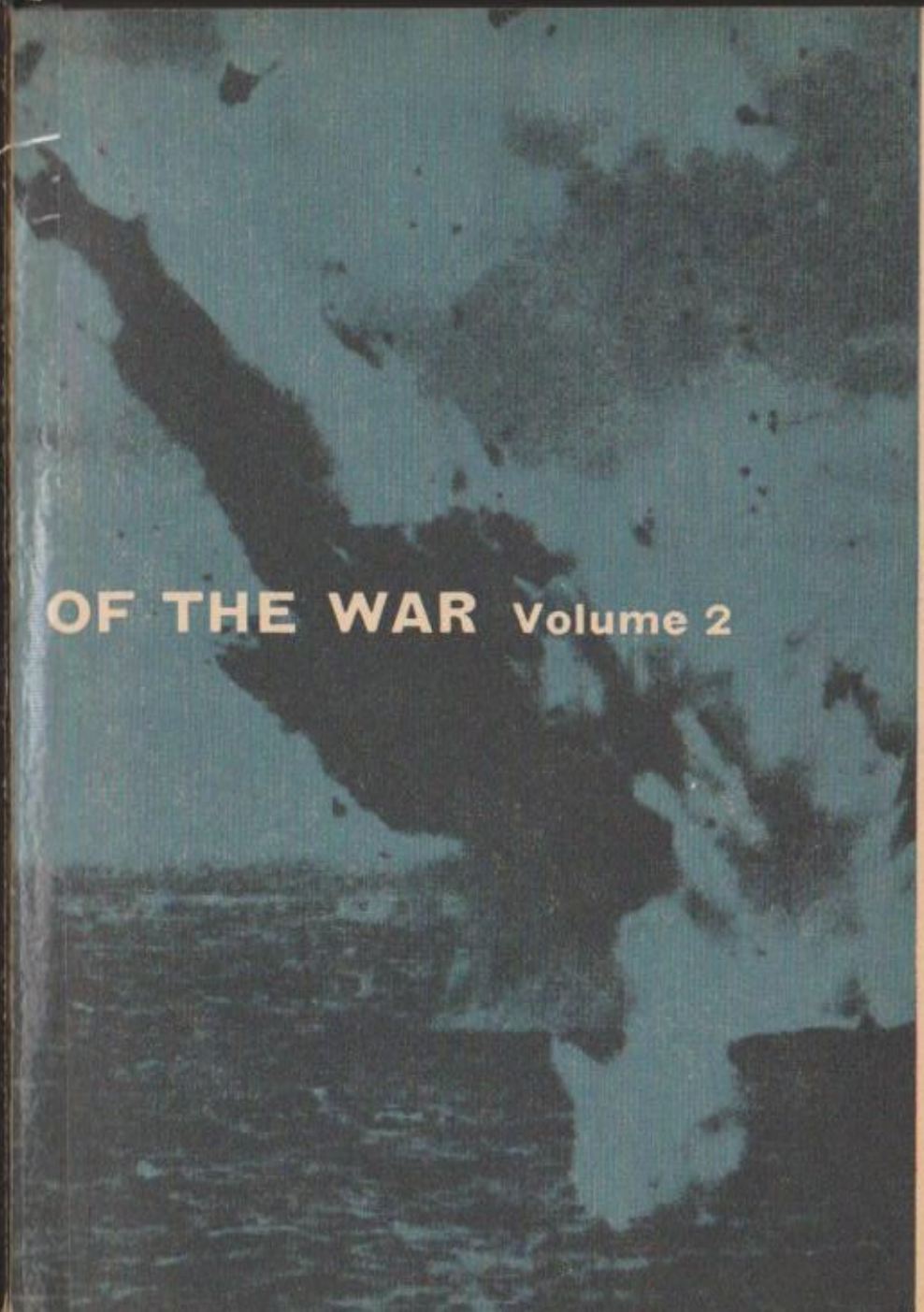
2.00

SECRETS AND
STORIES
OF
THE WAR

2

SECRETS AND STORIES OF THE WAR Volume 2

A selection of the articles and
book condensations in which
The Reader's Digest
recorded the Second World War



Published by
THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION LIMITED
25 Berkeley Square, London, W.1

THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION PTY. LIMITED
Reader's Digest House, 86 Stanley Street, East Sydney

THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION (CANADA) LIMITED
215 Redfern Avenue, Montreal 6, Quebec

THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION LIMITED
Parkade, Strand Street, Cape Town

© 1963 THE READER'S DIGEST ASSOCIATION LIMITED

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book or parts thereof in any form. For additional copyright information see page 720

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
HAZELL WATSON & VINEY LTD., AYLESBURY, BUCKS

Contents

VOLUME II

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY 369
Kendal Burt and James Leasor

COCKLESHELL HEROES 399
George Kent

FOURTEEN DAYS OF HELL ON AN ICECAP 405
Carl Wall

I WAS A NIGHT-CLUB SPY 412
Claire Phillips and Frederick Painton

THE END OF THE SCHARNHORST 419
C. S. Forester

THE MAN WHO SAVED LONDON 426
George Kent

'WINGATE'S CIRCUS' 434
Charles Rolo

THE CORPSE THAT HOAXED THE AXIS 442
The Hon. Ewen E. S. Montagu

CONFUSION WAS THEIR BUSINESS 452
Frederic Sondern

JAPAN'S LAST SECRET WEAPON—BALLOONS 458
Brigadier-General W. H. Wilbur

THE BATTLE OF D-DAY MINUS ONE 465
Blake Clark

THE NEUTRAL WAR IN SCANDINAVIA 470
Colonel Bernt Balchen

THE LONGEST DAY 475
Cornelius Ryan

THE IDOL OF SAN VITTORE 553
Indro Montanelli

THE RADAR SCREENS THAT TOLD LIES 560
Allan Michie

'I FELL 18,000 FEET WITHOUT A PARACHUTE' 567
Nicholas Stephen Alkemade

THE DAY BOMBAY BLEW UP 576
John Ennis

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO ROMMEL 582
Countess Waldeck

DEATH ON A DIVINE WIND 588
Captain Rikihei Inoguchi and Commander Tadashi Nakajima

THE MAN WITH THE MIRACULOUS HANDS 595
Joseph Kessel

THE RAF VERSUS THE V-2 638
Allan Michie

THEY KIDNAPPED A GENERAL 643
Greg Keeton

THE GREATEST SEA-AIR BATTLE IN HISTORY 650
Hanson Baldwin

GERMANY WAS BOMBED TO DEFEAT 657
Allan Michie

ADOLF HITLER'S LAST DAYS 666
Frederic Sondern

THE GREAT NAZI COUNTERFEIT PLOT 677
Major George McNally

WAS THIS THE DEADLIEST ERROR OF OUR TIME? 684
William Coughlin

NO HIGH GROUND 687
Fletcher Knebel and Charles Bailey

The One That Got Away

A condensation of the book

By Kendal Burt and James Leasor

Oberleutnant Franz von Werra was one of the most flamboyant and daring fighter pilots of the war. When he decided to break out of a British prisoner-of-war camp, circumstances and his own quick wits made him an exceptional danger to British security. The authorities knew this, yet he eluded them—by means which made his feat an escape classic. British, Canadian and German sources have been used to compile his enthralling story

London : 1940

The One That Got Away

OBERLEUTNANT Franz von Werra, marching between impassive guards, traversed the long corridors of the Air Interrogation Centre at Cockfosters and was ushered into a pleasant, richly panelled room. It was completely dark save for a powerful reading lamp which cast a circle of light on a massive mahogany desk. Behind this sat an RAF officer with a thin, lined face, bushy eyebrows and an upcurling moustache.

He spoke in facile but slightly accented German. "I am Squadron Leader Hawkes. Sit down, Oberleutnant."

As the prisoner clicked his heels and bowed stiffly, he noted a silver-knobbed walking-stick propped against the desk. It reminded him of the foppish British officer popular in German newspaper cartoons.

"Oberleutnant, thirteen British aircraft shot down and half a dozen destroyed on the ground is quite a respectable score." There was cold mockery in the interrogator's voice. "As a minor ace of the first war, I am especially thrilled to meet one of the major aces of the second."

Von Werra mimicked the other's casual drawl. "I have not read of your exploits in studying the Royal Flying Corps' fascinating history," he said, "and, intrigued as I am to meet you, I am not going to reveal any military information."

He paused for a moment, then added with sneering insolence,

"But how stupid of me, Herr Major! No doubt it was you who shot me down!"

The squadron leader said nothing.

The long silence which ensued was finally broken by the wail of an air raid siren. Another siren began, and then another, until the screaming cacophony covered the whole London area. Von Werra smirked. More German bombers overhead. It was 7th September 1940, and the all-out Battle of Britain was well under way.

Suddenly the squadron leader pushed himself up from his chair, seized his walking-stick, plunged the room into darkness, and walked over to the window. Despite the wailing sirens, von Werra could hear that he limped heavily, and that one of his boots squeaked. His interrogator was wearing an artificial leg.

"Forgive me, Herr Major. I'm terribly sorry. I had no idea——"

There was no reply. The squadron leader had drawn back the blackout curtains and was staring into the London night.

Presently the wailing died down, siren by siren. Hawkes redrew the curtains and returned to his desk. As he snapped on the lamp, he tipped the shade so that von Werra sat facing its harsh light.

"Tell me, Oberleutnant," he said casually, "which of your friends in the Headquarters *Staffel* of the Second *Gruppe* of Number Three Fighter *Geschwader* will look after Simba, your pet lion cub? 'Sanni', perhaps?"

Von Werra gasped. Since his capture two days before he had divulged only his name, rank and serial number. Yet a British interrogator knew not only his unit but the name of his pet lion and the nickname of his best friend. Nor was he bluffing; he seemed to know everything. He even commented on how slender was von Werra's claim to being a baron, a title which the young flyer often used.

FOR THE NEXT two hours Squadron Leader Hawkes continued his devastating attack, his sarcastic voice cutting deeply into the German's arrogance. "I must congratulate you, Oberleutnant,"

he said, "on your flair for publicity." He brought out a transcript of a German radio programme on which von Werra had told of shooting down five Hurricanes and destroying four more on the ground, all in one solo raid. Although there had been no witnesses, the feat had been lauded in Germany as "the greatest fighter exploit of the war."

Hawkes, half sitting on the edge of the desk, leaned over the prisoner. His voice was icy. "You know as well as I do, Oberleutnant 'Baron' von Werra, 'The Red Devil,' 'The Terror of the RAF,' that there was never an incident even remotely resembling your alleged exploit."

The RAF could hardly have suffered the loss of nine Hurricanes without being aware of it, Hawkes said. And item by item he pointed out the absurdities and holes in the fabrication, including the discrepancies between what von Werra had said over the radio and what he had told the Press. In the end the spuriousness of the story was manifest, and von Werra sat silent and abashed.

And now the squadron leader struck. "Suppose your fellow prisoners get to know what you and I know about your famous exploit—what sort of life would you lead in prison camp? You'd be the laughing stock of the place."

Von Werra smiled weakly, but smiled nevertheless. "Herr Major, I know what price you are likely to ask for keeping quiet—military information." His voice gathered firmness. "I will tell you nothing, Herr Major! You may make it impossible for me to live with my comrades, but the alternative would be much worse. I couldn't live with myself."

The interview was over. Von Werra had not broken under the squadron leader's interrogation. And as Hawkes rang for the guard, the prisoner showed a flash of his irrepressible spirit.

"Herr Major, I'll wager a magnum of champagne against ten cigarettes that I escape in six months."

It was as well that Hawkes did not accept the wager. He would have lost ten cigarettes.

THEN TWENTY-SIX YEARS OLD, wilful, exuberant, intensely ambitious, Franz von Werra had been in the Luftwaffe since its inception more than five years earlier. He had quickly got the measure of that service: the only way to get ahead was to get oneself talked about. What impressed was dash, aggressiveness, a touch of dare-devilry. Von Werra tried to outfly all the others in mock combats, indulged in such prohibited stunting as diving under bridges and low aerobatics over his girl friend's house. Whereas other pilots had pet dogs, falcons, even pigs, von Werra had to keep a lion cub. To add to his glamour he adopted the title of baron, which, despite its dubious legitimacy, had a certain snob value even in Hitler's forces.

When war came the important thing, of course, was to become an ace, and von Werra actually downed eight verified planes, which was not a bad record. But the Polish, Norwegian, Dutch and Belgian Air Forces had been demolished in a matter of days, and the French Air Force was hard hit. In a few weeks the RAF too would be knocked out, and all the Nazi flyers were scrambling for honours before it was too late. Von Werra's boast of destroying nine Hurricanes in his famous unwitnessed raid put his score near the top. The authorities, after reducing his claim from nine planes to five, awarded him the Knight's Cross. But, before he could receive it, on his tenth mission over Britain he was shot down.

However vainglorious his boasting, von Werra had an acute sense of security. At a time when the supremely confident Nazis expected few losses and scarcely bothered to give their airmen security briefings, the carelessness of captured flyers was a boon to British Intelligence. They often carried secret documents, maps, strength reports, technical data, diaries; or tattered bus tickets, cinema ticket stubs and crumpled receipts from which it was possible to deduce the location of various units. But von Werra burnt all the papers immediately after his plane crashed.

His first interrogation convinced him that the German leaders were right: the British *were* stupid. A courteous, informal army

captain with iron-grey hair offered him a cigarette and, ignoring their roles as captor and captive, seemed bent only on talking about German politics, Nazi ideals, Germany's claim to colonies, and the like. Vastly relieved not to be questioned on military matters, von Werra had relaxed, and had talked freely. Only later did he realize how astutely the interview had been managed, and that the interrogator had simply been sizing him up to decide which techniques would yield the best results in future interrogations.

Although von Werra had now successfully withstood the gruelling frontal attack of Squadron Leader Hawkes, who was his second interrogator, RAF Intelligence was by no means finished with him. In the ensuing days he was questioned repeatedly at all hours of the day and night by half a dozen different German-speaking officers working separately and in collaboration. Between them they tried every trick in the business to get him to talk.

He was cajoled, flattered, tempted and provoked. It was suggested that it might be possible to arrange for him to visit the West End—discreetly escorted, naturally, and in civilian clothes; everything would be laid on for him—dinner, a show, a visit to a night club. Another interrogation turned out to be a "friendly chat between flying types," with a bottle of whisky and a box of cigars on the table. Von Werra would play none of these dangerous games.

Using yet another stratagem, his captors kept him in solitary confinement for several days, then placed him in a room with another member of his unit, Oberleutnant Carl Westerhoff. The two happened to be close comrades and, when they were alone, greeted each other warmly. Westerhoff immediately plied his friend with questions, but von Werra answered guardedly, glancing continually round the room. Suddenly, he pulled Westerhoff into a dark corner, climbed on his shoulders, and peered into a ventilator grille. When he got down, he whispered, "That's where it is. There's definitely a black thing in there and some wires. Let's lean out of the window and talk. We'll be safe there."

The microphone in the ventilator was confirmed that evening

when the lights went on. From then on they did their talking leaning out of the window.

Three mornings later von Werra sat up in bed as though stuck with a pin. "God, what a fool I've been!"

The ventilator was the most obvious place in the room to put a microphone. The British had put it there *intending it to be found!* Moreover, the windows in other rooms he had been in at Cockfosters had all been fixed so that they would not open. This one had been deliberately left in working order, doubtless with a microphone under the ledge.

Von Werra leaned out of the window and said:

"Hello, RAF Intelligence. Oberleutnant von Werra calling. I'm trying to find a microphone concealed near the window of my room. I am now tapping the hollow sash board on the left-hand side. Are you receiving me? Oberleutnant von Werra calling and testing. . . ."

It may have been pure coincidence, but that same morning Westerhoff and von Werra were moved out of the room.

Before they had finally finished with him, the British interrogators had worked on von Werra for a total of three weeks. During that time he had not knowingly given away any military information whatsoever. But in the process of questioning him the British had unavoidably provided him with an almost complete picture of their methods and techniques. As it turned out this information was of far greater importance than anything he could have told them. For Oberleutnant von Werra was profoundly impressed by the subtlety and insidiousness of British interrogation methods, and he now knew more about them than did any other German—a fact that later had far-reaching consequences for both the Royal Air Force and the Luftwaffe.

VON WERRA was sent to Grizedale Hall, a prisoner-of-war camp situated in wild moorland country, twenty miles from the Irish Sea. The building was a gaunt stone mansion of forty rooms and

was very closely guarded. A captured U-boat commander, Kapitanleutnant Werner Lott, had recently attempted to escape from there and had not succeeded in getting beyond even the inner ring of barbed wire.

There had been few determined escape efforts, however. As in other British POW camps at this time (when the war was so soon to be over), most of the captured Nazis were content to sit tight and confidently await the arrival of German troops. But von Werra no longer shared the belief that Britain would be defeated by Christmas. The surprising and unpleasant competence of the RAF, which had already cost his unit fifteen pilots, and the numerous British defence measures he had observed—camouflaged pillboxes, blockhouses, anti-tank ditches, tall poles in open fields as anti-glider obstructions—had convinced him that the war would last a great deal longer.

Within ten days of his arrival at Grizedale Hall, von Werra had devised a scheme for escaping. The senior German officer, Major Willibald Fanelsa, who with the aid of a three-man council considered all escape plans, listened to it dubiously since all previous efforts had failed.

Every other day twenty-four prisoners were taken out on the road for exercise. They turned either north or south—apparently at the whim of the mounted sergeant who accompanied them—and were marched at a smart pace for three kilometres, then rested at a bend in the road for ten minutes, and were marched back. Discipline was strict and surveillance heavy; in addition to the mounted sergeant there was an officer on foot in charge; four guards marched in front and four in the rear.

The rest area on the northern route, where a wire fence gave on to an open meadow, offered no possible cover. On the southern route, however, the rest area was beside a stone wall. If some of his fellow prisoners distracted the guards, and others massed to shield his movements—and von Werra had worked out the details of how this could be done—he might vault the wall and run crouched

behind it until he reached a blind spot in the road, then escape into thick woods. Once free, he would make his way to the coast and try to stow away on a neutral vessel.

Major Fanelsa approved the plan as "by far the best that had been submitted" up to that time. The escape council provided a crude map and the heavy clothing needed for the rough moorland. Von Werra had already managed to acquire three shillings in English money, and had saved his chocolate ration for food. Two days later the plan was put into action.

MAJOR FANELSA asked the camp commandant to change the exercise period from 10.30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the ground that it interfered with camp educational classes in the morning, but actually to allow von Werra to escape nearer nightfall. At the camp gates, since there was a danger that the northern route might be taken, one of the prisoners gave the order to turn south. This was not challenged. The officer in charge thought the mounted sergeant had given the order; the sergeant assumed that it had been given by the officer.

When the usual rest was called, the guards took their positions on one side of the road while the prisoners went on the opposite side and stood or milled about in front of the stone wall. The appearance of a greengrocer's cart on the usually deserted road was at first dismaying. But it proved to be the perfect distraction, for the guards bought apples from it and the sergeant gave one to his horse to eat.

When the cart had gone, von Werra moved in behind the tallest of his comrades, who by prearranged plan were carefully grouped together. He hoisted himself up on to the wall. An elbow nudged him as a signal that no guards had been alerted, and he rolled over, dropping noiselessly into the field behind.

As the prisoners re-formed in column and the sergeant gave the order to march, two women, nearly half a mile away but in a position to see the fleeing prisoner, started shouting and waving

their arms. With great presence of mind one of the prisoners began waving and shouting back. The others followed suit with the result that the sergeant completely missed the meaning of the onlookers' frantic signals.

When they had gone 300 yards the Germans broke into a marching song—one of two alternative songs they had agreed to sing at this point. It was the favourable one, and it let von Werra know that he had not yet been missed. Now safely out of sight of his captors, who had disappeared round the bend, he stood up without further concealment and vaulted the stone wall. Then, waving gaily to the two frightened women, who were still helplessly watching him, he dashed across the road and disappeared into a thick pine wood on the other side.

Singing on the march was strictly forbidden, and when the prisoners suddenly burst into full-voiced song the guards had been taken by surprise. The mounted sergeant shouted, the officer shouted, cleared his throat, shouted again, and waved his stick. It had no effect; the Germans refused to stop singing.

Suspecting something amiss, the sergeant rode up and down the column trying to count the prisoners. But they kept moving from one rank to another and back again—a ruse suggested by von Werra—so that it was difficult to tell how many there were. After a word with the officer, the sergeant finally rode ahead of the column, drew his revolver, and ordered a halt.

When the POWs shuffled to a stop the officer went down the length of the column, counting. The count was twenty-three instead of twenty-four. To make sure, the officer and the sergeant counted again, moving from the rear to the head of the column. There could be no doubt about it: one prisoner was missing.

LOCAL RESIDENTS still recall the commotion that ensued. By 5.30 p.m. the whole anti-escape machinery of the area had been set in motion. Lorries, staff cars, Bren gun carriers and motor-cycles dashed about the countryside frenziedly. The Home Guard and

police were brought into the hunt, and three bloodhounds were rushed by car from headquarters at Preston. Before they arrived a heavy rain fell and made them useless. Regular troops, at first held back lest they destroy the scent, were then lined up to beat through the woods in great strength.

Von Werra disappeared completely for three days and nights. As the days went by and there was never a trace of him, more and more police and troops were called in. Ultimately several thousand were involved in the search. The German had simply vanished, and the police suspected that someone was harbouring him or that he was dead from exposure or injury.

Neither of these things had happened.

Even in the wildest parts of the Lake District there are many small stone huts, known as "hoggasts," used for storing sheep fodder. Home Guards visited each hoggast in their area in turn, however remote; and at about 11 p.m. on the fourth day two Home Guards patrolling the Broughton Mills area, only four or five miles from the coast, found a hut on which the padlocked door had been forced open. Shining a carbide bicycle lamp within, they discovered the fugitive. His face was thin and drawn, his clothes bedraggled, his boots worn down like a tramp's.

While one of the Home Guards held a gun on him, the other tied a cord tightly round von Werra's wrist, then tied it to his own wrist. But before they could lead him away, von Werra, in a perfectly timed manoeuvre, sent the man he was tied to sprawling, and at the same time knocked out the light. Then, leaping out of reach of the second man and jerking his bound wrist with all his might, he snatched the cord free and disappeared into the night.

He was not found again until after two more days of intensive search. At 2.30 p.m. on the sixth day of von Werra's freedom, a shepherd spotted him sneaking through the bracken on a 1,200-foot hill overlooking the Duddon Valley. The shepherd notified a nearby contingent of the Cumberland and Westmorland Constabulary, which quickly threw a tight cordon round the base of the hill.

When they had closed in on him, they at once handcuffed him. This time he did not get away.

AFTER SERVING twenty-one days of solitary confinement as punishment for his escape, von Werra was removed from Grizedale Hall and sent to Swanwick, a POW camp in the Midlands. But having got away once, he was confident that he could do it again, and was determined to try. So he at once inspected the security arrangements of the new camp minutely.

Swanwick was surrounded by two heavy barbed wire fences, and the narrow land between them was patrolled constantly. Watchtowers, set at intervals of fifty yards along the outside fence, were equipped with machine-guns and searchlights, and the fences were floodlit at night except during air raid alerts, at which time the guard was reinforced. The only possible means of escape, he decided, was by tunnelling.

The building he was sent to was only a yard or so from the inner boundary fence, and von Werra calculated that a tunnel only fourteen yards long, starting from a small unused room on the ground floor, would emerge beyond the outer fence. The exit would be uncomfortably close to one of the watchtowers, but a few shrubs and trees offered a little cover. The project seemed possible, and within a few days five other officers enthusiastically joined with him to organize the *Swanwick Tiefbau AG* (Swanwick Mining Company).

From the first the undertaking went well, despite many obstacles. Von Werra found that by skipping lunch, at which he would hardly be missed since only one British officer was then in charge of 150 prisoners, he could devote six hours a day to digging. The short-handled scoops and fire buckets, so thoughtfully provided by the War Office to cope with incendiary bombs, were perfect for excavating and carrying away dirt; and one of the tunnel team discovered a huge and partially empty catch-basin for rainwater into which it could be dumped. After a time the air in the burrow

became so nauseous that even a few minutes work incurred retching and violent headaches; and a large cave-in invited complete disaster since it left only a thin crust of earth above the tunnel. But no guard fell through this—fortunately it was directly under the first security fence; and fresh air filtering down through the remaining thin, porous dome solved the problem of ventilation.

All the prisoners co-operated as look-outs at strategic spots, and shouting coded warnings when the noise of digging or prying out large stones threatened to reach the sentries' ears. When noise was unavoidable it was drowned by group singing, harmonica playing, loudly boisterous card games, even a staged free-for-all fight. The work went steadily forward, and just one month after it was started, the tunnel, a "rabbit hole" just big enough to crawl through, was completed.

Meanwhile the five tunnellers (one of the original six pessimistically gave up midway) had made their plans for getting out of England. The sale of a diamond ring to a guard for a pound had given them each four shillings. With this scant fund for bus fares, two of the men hoped to reach Liverpool and stow away on a neutral ship for Ireland. Two others would make for Glasgow, where they would also try to board a neutral ship. Only von Werra decided to try it alone.

His experience while on the run in the Lake District had convinced him that a German escaper in Britain stood very little chance unless he could somehow get out of the country before the search for him got under way. The only means of doing this was by air. Von Werra therefore decided on the boldest possible course: he would make his way to the nearest RAF field and, relying on his wits when he got there, try to get his hands on a plane.

Casting about for a simple but convincing masquerade, he decided to pass himself off as a Dutch pilot who had crashed in returning from a bombing mission. This was plausible, for there were now a great many Czech, Dutch, Norwegian and Polish refugees serving with the RAF, speaking broken English (his own English was fair)

and wearing relatively unfamiliar uniforms. Since few airmen in the Midlands were likely to know much about the workings of Coastal Command, he would be from the "Mixed Special Bomber Squadron, Coastal Command," based near Aberdeen. Aberdeen would be a long way away, and the vague and ambiguous designation "Mixed Special Bomber Squadron" would allow him a certain latitude for explanations, he thought.

For a uniform, one prisoner gave a flying suit which he had somehow managed to retain, a second supplied fur-lined flying boots and a third leather gloves. To complete his wardrobe, he bought a woollen tartan scarf from the camp shop. He could forgo identification papers but would certainly need a British service identity disk, which was made of vulcanized fibre. This was impossible to obtain, but the camp's "Forgery Department" provided him with an exact replica made of cardboard.

At 9 p.m. on 20th December, wearing black pyjamas over his flying suit to protect it, von Werra cautiously broke through the last layer of earth above the tunnel exit. Conditions were ideal. The night was dark, and an air raid alert had caused the floodlights to be turned off. As he emerged to freedom, the camp chorus, greatly augmented for the occasion and singing with tremendous volume to cover any sounds of the escape, burst forth with "*Muss-i denn, muss-i denn, zum Städtele hinaus*" (I must away into the great, wide world).

Silently von Werra made his way through the darkness, and a few minutes later his companions emerged one by one from the tunnel. At a barn some 200 yards distant, where they had agreed to rendezvous, they whispered their good-byes to von Werra, shook his hand, then went their separate ways.

Since the raid was still on, von Werra decided to wait for the all-clear before venturing farther, lest he be picked up as a survivor of a crashed German aircraft. There was no hurry. With any luck, the escape would not be discovered until roll-call next morning, which

gave him at least ten hours start. He crouched down near the barn and waited patiently.

At 3 a.m. the all-clear had still not sounded. Von Werra dared not wait any longer. He emerged from his hiding place, tucked the camp's copy of *The Times* under his arm as a prop, and set off across the fields.

He might have walked less jauntily had he known that the police were already scouring the district for him. Swanwick had been alerted to the escape shortly after midnight, when one of the escapers, Major Heinz Cramer, had been captured. Major Cramer had tried to steal a bicycle he found leaning against the wall of a shop. Unluckily it belonged to the village policeman, who had left it there momentarily while he made a routine check of the shop's back premises.

Von Werra walked for miles along country roads without encountering a soul. He now had only a few hours left, and was beginning to worry. At 4.30 a.m. he heard a railway engine hissing on a near-by siding. He stepped over to it and climbed into the cab.

The engine driver's jaw dropped. "What d'you think you're up to?" he demanded.

"I am Captain van Lott, formerly of the Royal Dutch Air Force, now with the RAF," von Werra explained matter-of-factly. "I've just made a forced landing in a Wellington after being hit by flak in a raid over Denmark. I must get to the nearest RAF field quickly. Where is a telephone, please?"

The engine driver was helpful. "My mate Harold here's just going off duty. He'll walk you along to the station."

Walking along the track with the fireman, von Werra reached Codnor Park station at 5.30 a.m. But the telephone was in the booking office, which was locked, and the booking clerk, Sam Eaton, did not arrive till shortly before six. Nervously, von Werra waited.

When Eaton appeared he was out of sorts, and listened impatiently to von Werra's story of crashing a bomber near by, and of leaving

the uninjured crew at a farm-house which had no telephone. "Will you please ring up the nearest RAF field and ask them to send a car to fetch me? My base at Aberdeen will send a plane for me and my crew there."

Manifestly sceptical, the dapper little booking clerk asked several questions about the crash, then picked up the telephone. "Put me through to the police, please!"

Von Werra sat rigid while the other spoke at length into the telephone. But apparently Eaton merely wanted to rid himself of the problem. For when he hung up he said, "Don't worry. Somebody will be here presently. They're in a better position to help you than I am."

A porter now brewed tea. Eaton offered von Werra a cup, took one himself, and as the three sat waiting for the police, von Werra's magnetism and genial plausibility began to have their effect. For half an hour he answered questions about the crash and the bombing raid, and talked expansively about the RAF. Finally he confided—"I really should not tell you this"—that he belonged to a special squadron, and that the night's raid had been a test for a new bomb-sight. "Now do you see why it is so urgent that I should return?"

Eaton was visibly impressed. "Really! I'm very sorry. If you'd said so before. . . . Should I ring up the base?"

"Please do."

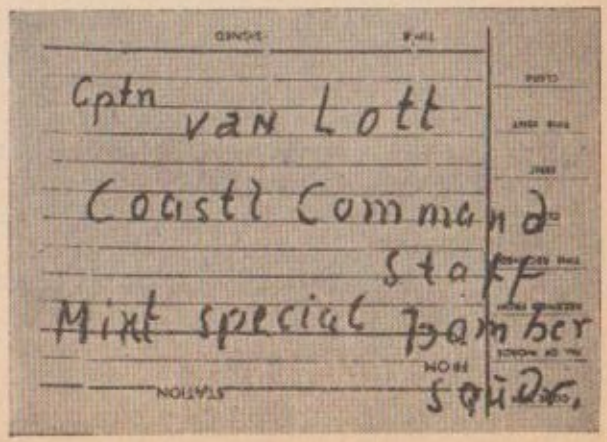
The clerk lifted the receiver and asked for Hucknall aerodrome. When he finally got through to the duty officer he explained about von Werra briefly, then motioned von Werra himself to the phone.

The Hucknall duty officer was hard to convince. He asked a great many questions about the crash, and remarked that it was curious that he had not heard about it. But at last he said, "I suppose I'll have to do something about you. I'll send a vehicle for you."

AT ONE MINUTE past seven the police arrived. There were two plain-clothes men and a uniformed sergeant. For a time they eyed von Werra in silence, their looks neither friendly nor hostile. Then

Franz von Werra—one of Hitler's most flamboyant heroes

Von Werra's fighter was shot down in southern England



Sam Eaton, booking clerk at Codnor Park Station, asked the strange caller to write down his name and unit. Von Werra had his story ready

one of the detectives suddenly rapped out: "*Sprechen Sie Deutsch?*"

Von Werra answered in English, "Yes, I speak a little German. Most Dutch people do."

The detective grunted and instantly the tension relaxed.

"*Sprechen Sie Deutsch?*" was evidently the only German they knew between them, for the second plain-clothes man now said, "So you're one of the Coastal boys, eh?"

Von Werra now knew that they had not come to arrest him. They were simply checking on his story. He had read enough accounts of RAF bombing raids in the British papers to sound sufficiently convincing.

"Yes," he said, giving his most disarming smile. "Last night it was a wizard show, but we nearly bought it."

At this knowing RAF slang, the three policemen looked significantly from one to the other and grinned.

"Where are your papers?" the sergeant asked.

Von Werra was commendably patient. "Do you not know that it is forbidden to take personal papers into the air? With us, the special squadron, that rule is strictest."

After that they did not even ask to see his identity disk. And although they asked a great many more questions, von Werra's answers, and the fact that Hucknall was sending a car for him, seemed to satisfy them.

At length one of the detectives clapped him on the back. "Grand types, you Coastal Command chaps."

"Yes. Jolly good luck to you," said the second detective. "Some Germans broke out of a prison camp near here last night. We thought at first you might be one of them."

Von Werra gulped, then covered his dismay by joining uneasily in their laughter. He was shaken to find that their escape had already been discovered!

Five minutes after the police had left, an aircraftman came in and saluted smartly.

"Transport for Hucknall, sir," he announced.

Von Werra's spirits soared again. As he settled himself comfortably for the ten-mile ride to the RAF base, he felt that he might yet steal that aeroplane.

CONTRARY TO von Werra's supposition, the Hucknall duty officer had not sent the car because he was convinced Captain van Lott was genuine but because he strongly suspected he was bogus. He had not heard of the escape from Swanwick; but van Lott had talked too much and too garrulously. And it seemed incredible that a bomber could crash in the dark without injuring any of the crew. Still, aircrews sometimes had amazing luck when they crashed. The officer decided that he'd better check Captain van Lott's story on the spot. If he was an impostor, his dress, his papers and the way he told his story face-to-face would give him away.

As a precaution the duty officer gave the driver of the car a gun, and warned him that van Lott might be a saboteur or escaped prisoner. The windows of the station headquarters were barred, and he locked all the doors except the main entrance. In the adjutant's office, where the interview would be held, he built up a roaring fire so that van Lott would be forced to take off his flying suit and disclose his uniform.

It had just turned daylight when the driver drew up at HQ and ushered von Werra into the adjutant's office. The duty officer, who wanted to be occupied so that he could study his visitor covertly, was taking down the blackout shutters.

He saw a man of five feet seven inches with curly hair, a frank boyish face and a pleasant smile. He looked neither villainous nor Teutonic. But his flying suit was non-regulation and of a strange type—pale grey-green with a long diagonal zip.

Still fumbling with the blackout shutters, the officer casually enquired, "Van Lott?—I won't keep you a moment. You may find it a bit hot and fuggy in here. Take your flying suit off, and please make yourself at home!"

The room was in fact as stifling as the stokehold of a ship. But

von Werra replied, "It is not worth the trouble. My plane will arrive any minute from Aberdeen." And, unobtrusively, he moved as far as possible from the fire.

The duty officer finished with the shutters, dusted his hands and returned to his desk. Von Werra shook hands with him.

"I am sorry to bother you," he said. "I wish not to make you trouble. I shall go and wait by the control tower for my plane, yes?"

"That's not necessary. Stay in here in the warm! Control will ring me as soon as contact is made with your aircraft."

Since his visitor betrayed no signs of discomfort at the heat and seemed to find it perfectly normal, the duty officer, who was also being grilled by his own coals, tried a new tack.

"You certainly had the most amazing luck with that crash," he said. "The details sounded very confusing over the phone. You'd better tell me the whole story again—you understand I have to make a report about it."

While von Werra hurriedly described the raid and the crash, the officer made notes and asked probing questions. When von Werra told him he had been interviewed by the police, it made him pause. If true, this put a rather different complexion on the problem. If the CID had been satisfied with his story, and had more or less vouched for him. . . .

Nevertheless he now picked up the phone and asked to have a call put through to the base at Aberdeen. A talk with the commanding officer there would settle the matter.

"Is that really necessary?" von Werra asked. "My plane must arrive soon."

"Sorry. You know how it is—red tape and all that. And you realize," the duty officer added, "that you must identify yourself properly. Suppose you show me your identity disk."

Von Werra laughed tolerantly at this insistence on formality. He had worn his carefully forged cardboard disk suspended round his neck. Confidently he unzipped the top of his flying suit and reached for it. As his fingers touched it, he gasped. Perspiration and the heat

of his body had reduced the cardboard to a clammy pulp. He dare not produce it.

As he continued to fumble uncertainly, and the other waited patiently, the telephone rang. He was saved. The duty officer picked up the receiver.

"Right!" he said to the operator. "About time! Put me through. . . . Hallo, Aberdeen?" The connexion was evidently a bad one, for he soon began shouting in exasperation.

But von Werra had no desire to hear the conversation. Backing to the door, he caught the officer's eye, raised his eyebrows interrogatively, and went through the motions of washing his hands.

"Won't be long!" he said, and stamped down the corridor to the door marked "Gentlemen." This he opened and slammed—from the outside. Then he tiptoed on to the main door. As he opened it he could hear the duty officer shouting:

"Captain van Lott . . . two words. . . . Hallo? . . . A Dutchman. . . ."

ONCE OUTSIDE, he crouched low until he had passed under the adjutant's windows, then sprinted towards the hangars. Time was now the supremely vital factor. Fractions of seconds mattered.

Near the first hangar he slowed to a brisk, purposeful walk. Construction was under way here, and carpenters looked down curiously at him from the scaffolding. Dodging round a cement mixer, and almost bumping into a labourer who was cutting open a cement bag, he came on a row of twin-engined bombers. These were no good to him, so he strode on.

Ahead, at the second hangar, was a group of Hurricanes. One part of Hucknall was an RAF training base for pilots; another part a highly secret Rolls-Royce experimental station. It was into this secret, heavily guarded section that von Werra had now penetrated. The confusion of the construction area had provided a loophole in its normally faultless security.

He approached the only mechanic in sight. "Good morning," he

said authoritatively. "I am Captain van Lott, a Dutch pilot. I have just been posted here. But Hurricanes I have not yet flown. The adjutant sent me here so you should show me the controls and make a practice flight. Which one is ready to take off?"

The mechanic, a civilian employee of Rolls-Royce, looked puzzled. "Haven't you come to the wrong place?" he asked. "This is a private firm."

"I know. But the adjutant said it was to you I should come. I haven't much time."

The mechanic pondered. Then the probable explanation dawned on him. The airman must be a civilian ferry pilot from the Air Transport Command, come to take delivery of a Hurricane. Such civilian pilots were known by the courtesy title of "Captain," and many of them were foreigners who spoke little English.

"I can't do anything for you until you've signed the Visitors' Book," he said. "Hang on a minute I'll go and fetch the manager."

When the mechanic went into the hangar, von Werra leaned against the fuselage of a Hurricane. A brand-new beautiful Hurricane with not a scratch on it! (It was a Mark II, a still-secret type not yet used in combat.) He was tempted to climb in and try to start the engine on his own. But this might wreck his chances altogether. There were controls he must be sure about before he attempted to take off.

The mechanic reappeared with a man in a khaki smock, presumably the manager. The official smiled and greeted him pleasantly.

"I hear you've come to collect a Hurricane. If you'll come with me we'll get your paper work fixed up."

"It shall take long? I have little time," von Werra replied. "I just want to learn controls of the Hurricane."

"I'm afraid nothing can be done until you sign the Visitors' Book. We'll soon fix you up, though."

Reluctantly von Werra followed him into the hangar. The manager walked with infuriating slowness, and a clock in the hangar reminded von Werra how much time had elapsed since the duty

officer had put through that call to Aberdeen. He almost lost his nerve as he followed the man.

The manager led him to a small office where a man in a blue uniform, evidently a works policeman, presided over a large ledger.

The policeman now took over. "If you'll sign along the next line, sir. . . ."

The entry had to be made across two pages, which were divided into columns. Using printed characters, lest his German-style script betray him, von Werra had no trouble with the first four headings, which were Date, Name, Nationality and Station. The others were meaningless to him, but the policeman helped him to fill them in, and presently the form was completed.

The manager now pronounced everything in order save for the receipt of the written orders covering the collection of the Hurricane. Von Werra said these were with his kit, which should arrive any moment by plane. Meanwhile, to save time, could he have instruction on the Hurricane controls?

"Righto," said the manager. "We can do that all right now you've signed the book."

As he emerged from the hangar with the mechanic, von Werra glanced apprehensively about. No RAF uniforms were yet in sight. If the duty officer would only give him five more minutes!

The mechanic walked over to one of the new Hurricanes, slid back the hood, and von Werra climbed in. The mechanic began to explain the unfamiliar instrument panel and controls. Von Werra hung on every word. Much of what the mechanic said was confusing, but he tried to concentrate on essentials so that he would not crash the Hurricane on take-off.

Before the mechanic could anticipate his move, he jabbed the starter button.

"Don't do that!" cried the mechanic in alarm. "Can't start without the trolley accumulator."

"Fetch it, then!" von Werra ordered.

"Somebody else is using it."

Von Werra smiled warmly. "Please get it, yes? I really am in a great hurry."

Obligingly, the mechanic went to get it, and presently returned driving the electric starter across the tarmac. He halted it under the engine, jumped off, and raised the cable to plug it in.

As von Werra operated the fuel-injection pump, the aircraft swayed slightly and a voice above him ordered quietly:

"Get out!"

Von Werra looked up and found himself facing the muzzle of an automatic pistol and the cold blue eyes of the duty officer.

IN RETROSPECT, the gaping holes in von Werra's story were evident; one glaring implausibility, for example, being that there is no such rank as captain in the RAF. But the fact remains that it *did* succeed in getting him on to a British airfield, where he all but took off in a Hurricane.

The five escapers, all of whom were caught within twenty-four hours, were given fourteen days solitary confinement at Swanwick. Perhaps the mildness of the punishment was due to the fact that the commandant knew he would soon be rid of the lot. In any case, on the last morning of their sentence he announced that they would be sent to Canada the next day.

When the *Duchess of York* sailed from Greenock on 10th January 1941, with 1,050 prisoners aboard, von Werra was kept under special guard until the moment of departure, an attention he found rather flattering. During the voyage he spent long periods immersed in a bath filled from a tap which ran ice-cold sea water. He wanted to harden himself, in case he got a chance to leap overboard when the ship landed.

No such opportunity occurred at Halifax, where the vessel put in on 21st January, and he now looked hopefully at the train into which the prisoners were shepherded. In von Werra's coach there were thirty-five prisoners and twelve guards. Three guards were on duty at a time, and they stood in the centre aisle: one at each end of the

car and one in the middle. Prisoners were escorted to the toilet one at a time, and the lavatory door was always kept open. There was ice between the coach's double windows, and they were presumably frozen shut. But the prisoners were forbidden to tamper with them in any case.

Meals were served at the seats. When the first steaming containers of food were brought round, the meal was unexpectedly luxurious after the sparse British fare—thick slices of salt pork, crisp fried potatoes, baked beans, bread, butter, tinned fruit, and piping-hot coffee. After they had eaten, many of the prisoners became benign and forgot their escape plans.

But von Werra did not forget. When he learned that the train was bound for a camp in Ontario, on the shore of Lake Superior, he knew that it would pass near the border. If he escaped he might be able to hitch-hike to the United States in a day.

The only feasible way to get away was to dive out of the window into the snow. This would be suicidal while the train was at full speed; yet it couldn't be done during a halt, for the guards were then particularly alert, and additional guards were posted outside the train. The best moment would be just following a halt, before the train had gathered speed.

While his seatmates watched the guards, von Werra knelt down and managed to raise the inside window a quarter of an inch. The opening was hardly noticeable, but it allowed the coach heat to reach the ice on the outer window. Eventually a thin trickle of water resulted. The melting was a slow business, however, and after twenty-four hours von Werra asked the other prisoners to turn up all their heat regulators full blast.

At the evening meal that day the prisoners were given a whole case of apples. They were starved for fruit and ate the lot. But apples, following the unaccustomedly rich and plentiful food, proved too much for their systems. From midnight onward long lines waited to go to the toilet, and some prisoners had to be escorted to the guards' toilet. The three guards on duty were highly amused. Their

attention was diverted, and often only one guard was in the coach.

Despite the heat in the coach, some of the sicker prisoners, white-faced and shivering, wrapped their coats or blankets about them and sat hugging their stomachs. Thus it seemed natural for von Werra to put on his overcoat. Afterwards he sat with his head in his hands.

As the train slowed for the next station, he waited for a signal that the guards were occupied, then stood up, unfolded his blanket and shook it out. Concealed behind this, one of his companions knelt down and slid the inner window open wide.

During the station stop, the remaining ice on the outside window melted quickly. The conspicuously clear glass now constituted a danger, but fortunately none of the guards noticed the window. When the train started up, several prisoners raised their hands to go to the toilet. While one of his companions repeated the blanket manoeuvre, von Werra stood up, caught hold of the outside window and jerked upward. It opened smoothly.

The next moment von Werra dived through it head first, and landed dazed but exhilarated in the snow. The others were able to close both windows unobserved, and his escape was not discovered until the train was several hundred miles away.

ACCORDING TO the Canadian authorities, von Werra escaped from the train near Smith Falls, Ontario, when he was only thirty miles from the border. Characteristically, von Werra later told the New York reporters that he left the train 100 miles north of Ottawa —a location that gave him a lot more elbow room for recounting extravagant Canadian adventures. In view of his talent for lying, how he actually got to the border is hard to say.

Indisputably, however, at 7 p.m. on 24th January he did arrive at Johnstown on the north bank of the St. Lawrence, and saw the twinkling lights of Ogdensburg, New York State, beckoning from the other side. The river was frozen, and he hoped at first to cross it on the ice. But a quarter of a mile from the American shore he came upon a channel of black, open water.

He returned to the Canadian bank and walked along it until he came to a deserted summer camp. Here he eventually found what he was looking for, a long cigar-shaped mound in the snow. It was an overturned rowing-boat.

Using heavy wooden fence palings as levers, he laboriously prised it free from the ice, and righted it. Then, exerting all his strength to push it, he eased the heavy boat inch by inch across the ice to the open channel. He had no oars, but again luck was with him; the boat drifted smoothly to the American shore.

The instant it scraped the shore ice, von Werra leaped out and ran up the river bank. At the first road he saw a parked car bearing New York licence plates. The driver, a nurse from a near-by hospital, was just preparing to start it.

"Excuse me," he asked anxiously. "Is this America?"

He wanted to make sure, for he knew that in places the Canadian border extended well below the St. Lawrence.

"You are in Ogdensburg," the nurse replied.

He smiled wearily. "I am an officer of the German Air Force. I am"—he corrected himself—"I *was* a prisoner of war."

HE WAS by no means safe yet. A German prisoner who had recently escaped into Minnesota had been gaoled there for three months, then returned to Canada. Von Werra was saved from a similar fate by his flair for publicity.

When US Immigration authorities charged him with illegal entry and handed him over to the Ogdensburg police, the reporters and feature writers quickly besieged von Werra's cell. His boasting, exaggerations and colourful inventions gave them plenty to write about. Much of the newspaper comment was caustic. As the Ogdensburg *Journal* wrote: "At his mass Press conference he spun stories which would have amazed Joseph Conrad or the author of the *Arabian Nights*." But the publicity given to him by the Press, news reels and radio made his case an international issue.

The German consul, who was anxious to muzzle his embarrassing

charge, posted a 5,000-dollar bond, spirited him away to New York City, and for a time saw that he was entertained royally at theatres, night clubs and social functions. In Germany, the publicity given to his escape quickly elevated him to a national figure. Meanwhile Canada had tried to have him arrested for the theft of the thirty-five-dollar rowing-boat. And Britain, well aware of the threat he offered to British security (since he had coped with the entire interrogation gamut), was also making every effort to extradite von Werra. On 24th March, German consular officials told him certain new moves in Washington made it likely that he would soon be handed back to Canada. He was to forfeit his bond, which had now been raised to 15,000 dollars, and leave the country illegally at once.

FBI men had been detailed to follow von Werra's movements, but he eluded them by a series of taxicab changes, took a train for El Paso, and crossed the international bridge disguised as a Mexican labourer. The German Embassy in Mexico arranged a passport for him under an assumed name and secured an air passage to Germany via Rio de Janeiro and Rome. He reached Berlin on 18th April 1941.

For security reasons, von Werra's return was for a time kept secret, and there was no public adulation. But Reichsmarschal Goering promoted him to Hauptmann (Captain), and Hitler personally congratulated him on his escape and awarded him the long-delayed Knight's Cross for his supposed earlier exploit. And there were many private parties and receptions.

Von Werra's escape had consequences out of all proportion to its significance as an individual feat of daring. He was attached to the intelligence branch of the German Air Force, and his report on British interrogation methods, subsequently expanded into a twelve-page booklet which became standard issue for all German aircrews, had an immediate effect. Thereafter the authorities found captured German airmen extremely security-conscious.

At Grizedale Hall and other camps von Werra had zealously collected the many interrogation experiences of other prisoners to add to his own, and had discussed them with captured staff officers. They

too had been impressed by British interrogation methods, and agreed that they greatly menaced German security. To most German pilots, who were inclined to dismiss the British interrogators as "old women" and "desk warriors," betraying secrets meant giving away names, strengths and locations of units, drawing maps of airfields and revealing technical data. But they gave away information without ever realizing that they had done so, such was the skill of these "desk warriors." Von Werra had learned at first hand that there was no scrap of apparently trivial and irrelevant information that the RAF did not record and eventually fit into the picture: and that the only defence against interrogation as clever as that was "complete and persistent silence."

He reported, for example, that British interrogators showed an extraordinary interest in prisoners' Field Post numbers, often taking great pains to get this apparently harmless and useless information. When the Germans looked into the matter they realized that the British could deduce a prisoner's unit and its location from his Field Post number. The system of numbering was changed.

Von Werra also visited Dulag Luft, the German air interrogation centre, with some far-reaching consequences. The Germans had not appreciated the great importance of interrogation as a source of military information, and when von Werra "sat in" on some of their interrogations he found them so superficial as to be almost farcical. "I would rather be interrogated by half a dozen German inquisitors than by one British expert," he reported. As a result of his visit, Dulag Luft adopted many of these British interrogation techniques.

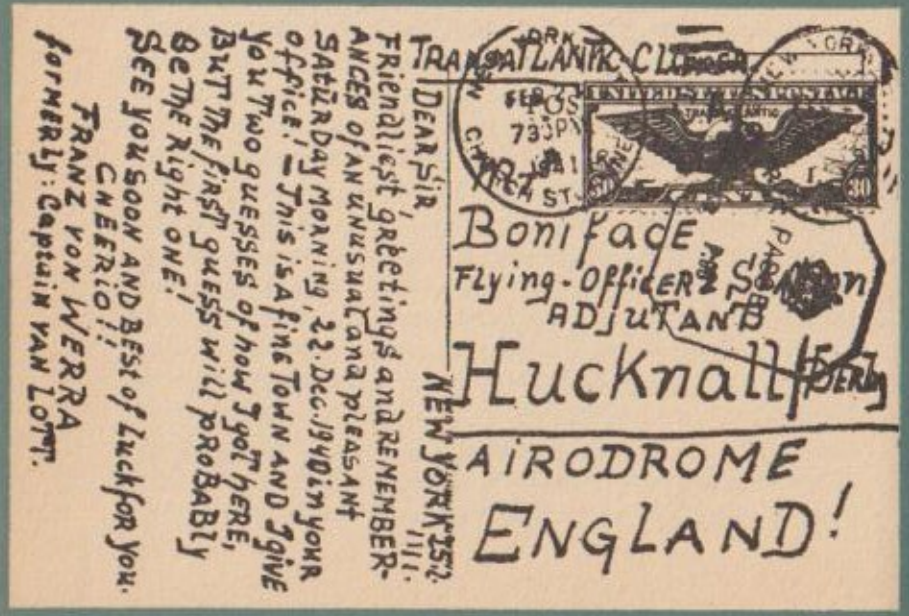
When he made a tour of German prisoner-of-war camps to suggest anti-escape measures, and found conditions worse than he had enjoyed in England, von Werra made a number of recommendations for improving the lot of British prisoners. A book that he wrote about his escape experiences was surprisingly friendly in tone and appreciative of the British. He could not resist improving on reality in the title, however. He called it *Meine Flucht aus England* (My Escape from England), though he had escaped from Canada; as it

happened, no German prisoner ever succeeded in escaping from Britain during the war. The German authorities banned the book's publication. It was considered pro-British.

A fortnight after Germany attacked Russia, von Werra manoeuvred to be sent to the front there. As commanding officer of the First *Gruppe* of 53 Fighter *Geschwader*—famous as the "Ace of Spades" *Geschwader*—he was credited with eight more air victories.

In September his *Gruppe* was moved to Holland and assigned to coastal-defence patrol. On 25th October, during a routine patrol, von Werra's plane developed an engine fault and dropped into the sea. German newspapers announced that he had been killed in action. But the investigating court of inquiry reported the accident as due to "engine failure and the pilot's carelessness."

Condensed from "The One That Got Away," published jointly by William Collins Sons & Co., Ltd., and Michael Joseph Ltd., London.


TRANSATLANTIC CLIPPER
UNITED STATES POSTAGE
30
Bonifade
Flying-Officer
ADJUTANT
Hucknall
AIRODROME
ENGLAND!
NEW YORK
DEAR SIR,
FRIENDLIEST GREETINGS AND REMEMBERANCES OF AN UNUSUAL AND PLEASANT SATURDAY MORNING, 22. DEC. 1940 IN YOUR OFFICE! — THIS IS A FINE TOWN AND I GIVE YOU TWO GUESSES OF HOW I GOT HERE, BUT THE FIRST GUESS WILL PROBABLY BE THE RIGHT ONE!
SEE YOU SOON AND BEST OF LUCK FOR YOU.
CINCERIO!!
FRANZ VON WERRA
FORMERLY: CAPTAIN VAN LOTT.

When he reached the United States, von Werra sent this postcard to the RAF officer who had interrogated him at Hucknall airfield

Cockleshell Heroes

By George Kent

IT WAS the third year of the war and France was occupied by the Nazis. In and out of Bordeaux, France's third largest port, fast cargo vessels were sneaking through the Allied blockade, bringing material essential to the German war effort. Allied planes could not be spared to bomb them, and the vessels were too swift to be caught by submarines. Yet they had to be stopped.

The Ministry of Economic Warfare gave the problem to Lord Louis Mountbatten, chief of Combined Operations. A Royal Marine officer in his command, Captain H. G. Hasler, had suggested earlier that small boats be used to destroy shipping in enemy harbours. It had appeared to be a wild idea, but Mountbatten decided to give it a trial.

Operation Frankton started in mid-1942 when Captain Hasler, appointed leader of the expedition, rounded up thirty marines who wanted a personal crack at the enemy, whatever the danger. He picked few of the beefy, film-hero types. "They were weedy, smallish men for the most part," he says, "the kind whom life has kicked around enough to develop the courage and the will to see a job through." Most of them had never been in a canoe. Some did not know how to swim.

Told nothing of their objective, these men were sent to the naval base at Portsmouth for six months of arduous training. There they learned how to paddle without making a sound, how to get back

into a canoe without tipping it over, working at night and in the roughest weather. They put lead weights round their hips and sank to the bottom, with a tube in their teeth so that they could suck oxygen from a submarine escape contraption. They practised slipping undetected along the heavily guarded entrance to Portsmouth harbour. Each month Hasler eliminated the unfit.

Then the men learned about the limpet bombs that they would use. They were fitted with a powerful magnet so that they could be attached to a ship, usually below the water line. They contained no clockwork—the ticking would betray their presence. Instead, a thumb-screw pierced a capsule of acid which burnt through a plastic fuse at a fixed rate of speed. When the plastic was eaten away the bomb went off.

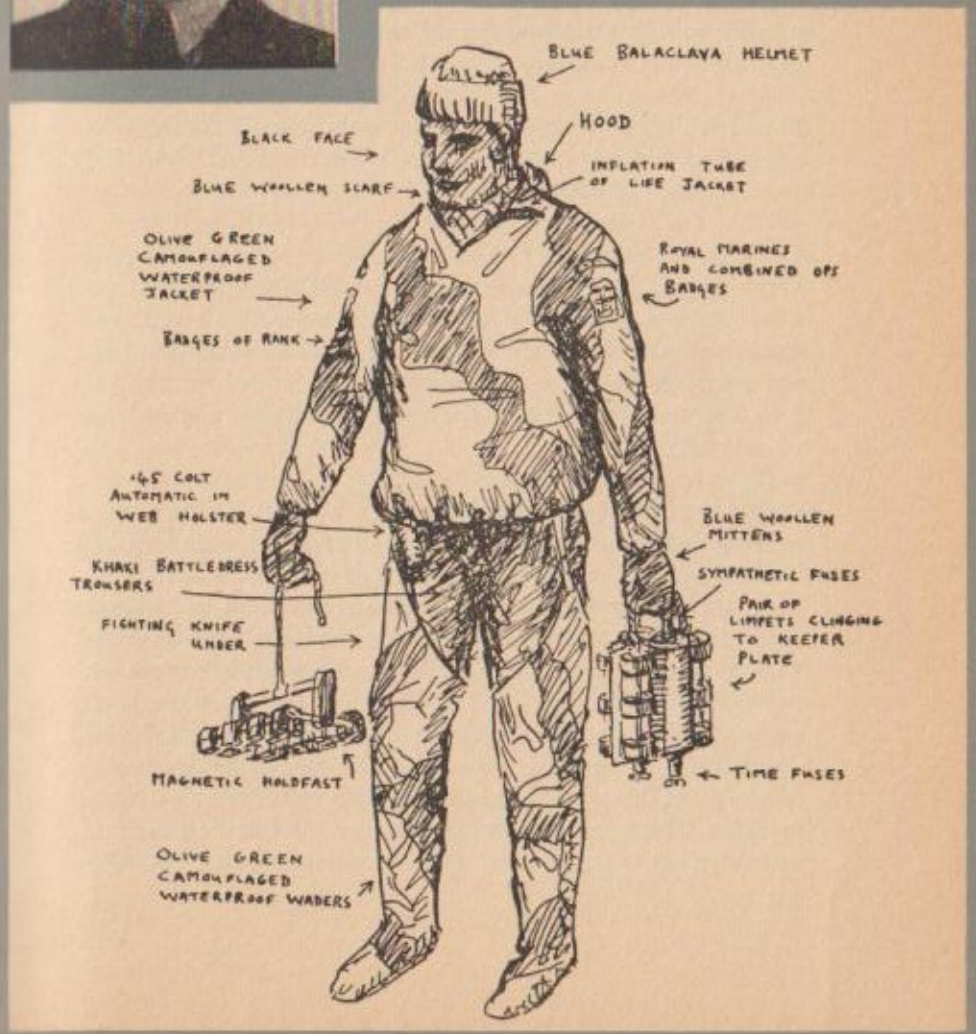
On 1st December the men boarded the submarine *Tuna*. At sea Hasler told them for the first time where they were going, and briefed them in detail. One man voiced the question in everybody's mind: How about getting back? Would the submarine be waiting? Hasler shook his head. The canoes were to be scuttled and the men were to make their way across France to Spain with the help of the French underground.

At ten o'clock on the night of 7th December the *Tuna* surfaced twelve miles off the mouth of the Gironde. Hatches sprang open and ten men in camouflage-mottled Royal Marine denims heaved five specially designed collapsible canoes over the side. Over each canoe went a kayak-like cover made of plywood. Into each canoe went limpet mines, a Sten gun fitted with a silencer, rations, a compass, spare paddles and a bailer. Each man carried a Colt revolver, a commando knife, a grenade and a small black whistle that gave out a sound like a sea-gull's cry. The men's faces and hands were smeared black.

Hasler and a wiry, ten-stone cockney named William Edward Sparks got into *Catfish*, the other two-man crews into *Coalfish*, *Crayfish*, *Cuttlefish* and *Conger*. The five cockles, as they were called, moved off. Paddle spray froze on the plywood decks. Heavy loads

Captain (later Colonel) Hasler led the Royal Marines who went to war in canoes

Hasler's own sketch of a cockleshell hero equipped for the Bordeaux raid



made the canoes stable, but permitted the waves to wash in. *Coalfish* was lost crossing the violent tide-race at the entrance to the estuary.

Now there were four.

In the estuary itself there was another tide-race. *Catfish* slipped through safely, then *Crayfish* and *Cuttlefish*. But not *Conger*. Soon *Conger* was discovered, overturned. The two men who had manned her were floating in the water, paralysed with cold. It was impossible to take them into the remaining cockles—the craft were overloaded as it was.

After sinking *Conger*, Hasler told the men to cling to the sides of *Catfish* while he and Sparks paddled them towards shore. About 100 yards off he told them to make a try for the beach. "We'll have to leave you," he said. "God bless you."

Now there were three.

Ahead, the shore was fortified and a lighthouse was casting a revolving beam. Hasler saw that, rather than the one solitary patrol vessel that he had been told to expect, there were four. *Catfish* managed to slip through between the first guard ship and the mole, and a moment later *Crayfish* made it. They waited for *Cuttlefish* for a long time, making gull cries with their whistles. But there was no answering call.

Now there were two.

And the first night of paddling was not yet over. The four remaining men had come about twenty miles; the other six men were believed to be either dead or in the hands of the Germans.

As the sky began to grey, the crews of *Catfish* and *Crayfish* decided to take cover for the day on what looked like an island. They thrust their canoes into the bushes, covered themselves with camouflage netting, and three of them went to sleep while Hasler stood guard. In a short while he woke the others for he had discovered that they were actually on the edge of a fishing settlement. About thirty Frenchmen were sitting round bonfires, having breakfast. The four marines were plainly visible, but the Frenchmen pretended not to notice them. Hasler walked over to talk to them

while his men covered him with Sten guns. The fishermen promised not to report their presence.

During the day they watched a gang of German soldiers working, within shouting distance, on a dike. They were glad when night came and they were able to get under way again.

The following dawn Hasler stepped ashore to investigate a possible hiding place and ran smack into a Nazi ack-ack station. But for the fact that the sentry was asleep the show would have been over. The marines passed that day sitting in the canoes, their camouflage nets draped over them.

It took two more nights and a day for Hasler and his men to reach Bordeaux. They concealed themselves among high reeds near the harbour during the daylight hours of 11th December. At nine o'clock that evening Hasler gave the command, "Fuse limpets." Each man had four bombs, timed to explode in nine hours. The four men shook hands.

Bordeaux was brilliantly lit. Every ship in harbour, working its cargo, shone beneath the cluster lamps fastened to the mast-heads. The water reflected all the lights like a mirror. The marines hugged the shore, letting the tide carry them forward while they inspected their potential targets.

After six months of work and planning, this was it. Hasler picked a fat cargo ship, and while Sparks held the canoe in place he put his first limpet on a six-foot pole and brought it slowly underwater to the side of the ship. There the limpet's magnet held it firmly. He placed one under the bow, one under the stern, one amidships.

At the next ship, a sentry on deck seemed to spot them after they had fastened two limpets, and he shone his torch down at them. But apparently he wasn't sure what he saw. Their hands and faces were black, they were hooded, and the canoe was camouflaged. The canoe edged along the side of the vessel while on deck the sentry's feet followed them. At the stern, concealed by the overhang, they waited about twenty minutes, then let the tide carry them to the next target.

Hasler, making an effort to get at a third large cargo ship, steered the canoe between it and another vessel. As the sea rolled the two ships together, only a dexterous thrust of the paddle saved him and Sparks from being crushed. They managed to fasten two limpets to the cargo ship, and finished their night's work by placing one under a tanker.

Hugging the shore again, the two men set out for the open sea. They had paddled about an hour when a splash behind them sent them driving for the reeds. They were relieved to find that the splash was their mates in the *Crayfish*. The *Crayfish* crew had accounted for two ships, bringing the score for the night's work to six. As there were twelve blockade-runners, six at sea and six in port, Operation Frankton had been a complete success.

The escape plan called for the men to travel in pairs, so they scuttled their canoes and parted. This was the last Hasler and Sparks ever saw of the *Crayfish* crew. It was learned at a trial of Nazi war criminals after the war that they were captured and shot, as were five other members of Operation Frankton. One man was drowned; his body was picked up months later.

Hasler and Sparks did not turn up in London for five months. Aided by the French underground, they made their way across the Pyrénées to Spain and finally to Gibraltar. But long before they arrived in England, the report of what they had accomplished in Bordeaux harbour had reached Mountbatten's headquarters.

When the Commander of Special Operations learned that six enemy ships had been sunk, he was delighted. "That's the work of my men!" he cried.

"The devil it is," Lord Mountbatten said dryly. "It was the boys in the cockleshells!"

Condensed from Everybody's Weekly

Greenland: 1943

Fourteen Days of Hell on an Icecap

By Carl Wall

"IF YOU want to know what it was like for the first seven days," said Pilot Officer David Goodlet, "take two of your best friends, climb inside a steel cylinder and set the temperature at 40° below. For food, eat half a dog biscuit a day. For water, suck the ice your breath forms on the walls of the cylinder."

From his chair at the radiator, Flight Sergeant Arthur Weaver added: "And you shouldn't be able to know where you are or if you're going to get out. That was the worst part of it."

Two months before, while flying a bomber to Britain, Goodlet, Weaver and navigator Al Nash had been forced down on a glacier on the coast of Greenland. For fourteen days, in temperatures as low as −40°F, the three had kept themselves alive.

I was talking to Goodlet and Weaver in a Toronto hotel one day in 1943, soon after their ordeal. Both were very thin and very young. Weaver was twenty-one, Goodlet twenty-two. Al Nash was spending his leave in Winnipeg, but he might as well have been sitting there with us. The three of them had gone through this thing together, and Weaver and Goodlet weren't forgetting it.

The room was well heated, but Weaver kept on his heavy service overcoat and continued to hug the radiator. "It's been two months since they took us off that icecap, but I still can't get warm," he said.

Two hours out from Newfoundland they had run into heavy fog. Then the radio went dead. Goodlet tried to get above the

weather but the bomber iced up and refused to climb. They flew blind at about 15,000 feet for the next six hours.

"With half an hour's fuel left, I knew I had to start going down," Goodlet said. "We passed through heavy clouds, wondering all the time if we were going to bump into a mountain.

"We came out of the fog, and I could see we were about fifteen miles inside the coast line. There were mountains, as jagged as broken bottles, running parallel with the coast. We were over a snow-covered plateau sloping from these mountains to the sea.

"I went back and forth at about 500 feet. It was hard picking a spot to try to land because the plateau was criss-crossed with crevasses. But I finally set her down on her belly—leaving the wheels up, of course."

"He makes it sound bloody simple," Weaver said, taking up the story. "But landing in deep snow at 110 miles an hour is something of a trick. There wasn't a jar. Al and I yelled, 'Good show!' and pounded Dave when he came down from the pilot's compartment.

"Dave stepped outside to have a look and sank into the snow up to his thighs. We pulled him back and slammed the door. The sun was setting and we heard the wind blowing snow against the ship. I looked at the thermometer. It was 34° below zero.

"We decided to eat the sandwiches and drink the coffee they'd given us when we took off. But the coffee was frozen solid, and the sandwiches were as hard as bricks. So we sat there sort of sucking at them until they melted enough to chew.

"Then we smoked, lighting one cigarette off the other. We had plenty of cigarettes—we were taking 5,000 to friends in Britain—but we had only one book of matches and Dave's lighter.

"Every ten minutes we'd pound each other and kick our feet against the floor and sides, but the cold seemed to be getting inside us. Dave climbed into the cockpit and read the air-speed indicator. It showed sixty-two miles an hour and you could almost feel the wind right through the steel sides of the plane.

"I don't believe we'd have lasted through the first twenty-four

hours if Al hadn't had the idea of ripping our parachutes into strips and winding them round our bodies and feet. By midnight the thermometer had gone down to 41° below and we were shaking with cold. We decided to crawl into the tail and lie on top of each other. The heat of our bodies helped a little but we all kept on shivering. We stayed like that all night, taking turns at being middle man because that was the warmest spot.

"We talked all night—about everything we could think of. We decided to ration the box of iron biscuits—our only food—to one biscuit apiece every twenty-four hours. These biscuits were about half an inch square and were supposed to be full of vitamins, but they tasted like sawdust.

"Then we got talking about Gandhi and how long a man could go without food. That made us feel better, because we knew he was just a little old shrivelled-up chap and if he could go for fifty or sixty days without food we thought we could too. None of us said anything about Gandhi having the better temperature.

"At eight next morning we prised open the door. The blizzard was still on, but the thermometer had gone up to 28° below.

"I think we were hungrier the second night than at any time later on. We remembered the Christmas dinners we'd had when we were kids, and talked about the stuff we'd left on our plates. That night we all raised our right hands and swore we'd never leave anything on a plate again. All the time we were talking, we kept on smoking and shuffling about. Our feet would get numb and we were afraid they'd freeze solid and gangrene would set in.

"That was the way it went for three days. About eleven o'clock on the third night, the plane stopped shivering and we knew the wind had died down. Al took our bearings very carefully and found we were just within the Arctic Circle, about fifteen miles from the Atlantic and 110 miles from the nearest place on our map.

"By that time our brains were a little numb too. We weren't particularly scared. We started talking over how we could get to that place.

"We decided to inflate the rubber dinghy, drag it over the snow to open water, and paddle those 110 miles. But to get through the deep snow to the coast we'd need snowshoes. We found some plywood box tops in the cargo, worked all night with Dave's knife, and by morning had five pretty good snowshoes. We made the sixth out of the pilot's cushion. Then we collected the compass, the Very pistol, three marine distress signals and the box of biscuits.

"We'd just about got set when the wind rose and everything was grey again with whirling snow. It made us feel like hell and we didn't talk so much.

"Fooling with the radio that afternoon, I somehow got it working and picked up a Canadian airport—very low and weak. I broke in with the SOS and our position, and got an acknowledgment just as the batteries gave out. Getting that message through helped us to keep going, and we spent two more days and nights talking, smoking and nibbling on the biscuits—which we'd cut down to one quarter a day.

"There was no let-up in the wind or the cold, and the inside of the plane became covered with ice about three inches thick. You got the feeling that the ice was closing in on you and there was nothing you could do to stop it except to stop breathing.

"Our mouths were sore and bleeding from sucking snow and ice, but no matter how much we sucked we couldn't quench our thirst. None of us had slept since we'd left Newfoundland, yet we didn't seem to be tired any longer or even hungry.

"On the sixth morning, the weather cleared and we inflated the dinghy with the carbon-dioxide cartridge. We destroyed the bomb-sight and burnt all papers, using the flame to melt a cup of coffee, and started off. But the dinghy pulled hard and in two hours we covered only a quarter of a mile; then the snow started again. We knew we couldn't last long in that stuff, so we worked back to the plane and holed up again.

"The next afternoon the weather took a funny turn. The temperature shot up 54° and rain started. When we stepped out it was like

stepping into the tropics. The snow was mushy and the going was even harder than the day before, but we kept on until dark.

"That night our flying jackets and boots froze to us like armour. We propped the dinghy up with its aluminium oars and crouched on the lee side for the next seventeen hours of darkness.

"As soon as it got light we started towards the coast. We had to walk off course for a mile to get round the first crevasse. And then we heard the sound of a plane. We made a dive for the marine signals. Only one worked, but that one was enough. The plane circled low above us and dropped small parachutes with food, clothing, sleeping-bags, a bottle of Scotch, snowshoes, 100 feet of rope and a note of instructions.

"We put on dry clothes and opened the rations, which were divided into separate meals. We started with breakfast and worked our way through to dinner. The note told us to rope ourselves together and keep on towards the coast in as straight a line as possible. A patrol boat would pick us up. After that we got into the sleeping bags and fell asleep—for the first time in nine days. We woke up an hour later, sick as dogs. That night, rain and sleet soaked and then froze our clothes and sleeping bags. It was damned cold lying in that slush, so we stood for the next seventeen hours holding the sleeping bags over our heads to keep the rain off. We didn't dare take a step because of those crevasses.

"The next morning a heavy fog covered everything, so we had to stay put. We spent the day massaging our swollen feet. They were really sore, and it hurt like hell to walk with those snowshoes. We rubbed our feet with a little of the Scotch and that helped. The fog lifted the next afternoon and we began to plough across the snow. We were getting weak so we discarded the sleeping bags.

"The temperature went right down that night and we huddled close together with our arms round each other. That was a mistake because after an hour we were all frozen together in a solid mass and it took a lot of our strength to prise ourselves apart.

"I think that night, for the first time, we began to wonder if we

were going to make it. The icecap was heaving, and every hour there was a thundering noise that echoed between the mountain ranges.

"Al said we should sing a hymn but none of us knew anything that was like a hymn except "God Save the King" and "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition." So we sang those. It made our lips and mouths bleed like the devil but we felt better.

"The next day was clear and we made better time, although there were more crevasses as we neared the coast. We were moving and thinking like automatons now. Even when we came to the edge of a crevasse—and some were a thousand feet deep—we didn't feel any fear. We'd just methodically back away and walk round it.

"About 3.30 the next afternoon we spotted what looked like a rowing boat out in the ice field. Our ship! We forgot our sore feet, our thirst, how tired we were and put everything we had into the last couple of miles between us and the coast.

"We reached the edge of the glacier just before dark and found we were on a sheer cliff of ice about 250 feet above the coast line. With Dave's lighter we tried to set our parkas on fire, but they were too damp.

"About seven, the ship sent up flares and played its powerful searchlights along the coast. The three of us jigged and yelled our heads off every time the searchlights swept across us. But the lights never settled on us.

"When daylight came we saw a plane take off near the ship. We yelled and waved our parkas. The pilot didn't spot us. Soon he turned back towards the boat.

"About dark the boat headed out to sea. We didn't say anything. We just stood and watched it until darkness blotted it out.

"We thought we were gone then. We didn't have enough strength left to make it back to the plane and we knew we couldn't stand even one more of those forty-below nights in the open.

"About an hour after dark, Dave said he thought the parkas might be dry enough to burn now. We tore part of them into strips. Dave's lighter was getting low on fuel and it took a lot of

sparking to get it going. But when it did the parkas caught and we had a good, bright blaze.

"As soon as the flames went up there was a burst of flares from the ship and its signal lamp started blinking. Eagerly I read the Morse message: 'Move back from edge of glacier and bear south to meet landing party.'

"The three of us yelled and pounded each other. We felt wonderful. There was a bright moon that night and we backtracked over the crevassed area, then followed the glacier slope.

"A landing party picked us up six hours later and took us to the ship. It was a US coast-guard patrol vessel and the crew treated us like newborn babies. The skipper told us he had given us up for lost when he spotted our fire.

"I thought we'd been more or less normal all the time, but the ship's doctor told us later that we were in a sort of twilight between sanity and insanity and that we'd probably have cracked in another day and night.

"The thing that interested him most was the fact that we'd had only about two hours sleep in those fourteen days. He gave us stuff to make us sleep but even in the sick-bay I couldn't sleep more than an hour at a time. I'd wake up to find Al and Dave awake too, smoking and talking the same as they did back in the plane.

"It's been like that ever since. Neither Dave nor I could sleep more than an hour at a time. I don't know how it is with Al, but I'll bet he's waking up in the middle of the night too, shivering with cold and scared to death he's back on that glacier."

I asked them what it was that had kept them going. Neither Weaver nor Goodlet answered immediately. Then Weaver said:

"Dave had his wife and baby daughter. Al was worried about his mother, alone out in Winnipeg. And I had my wife. Do you see what I mean? We had something to live for."

Condensed from Maclean's

I Was a Night-club Spy

By Claire Phillips
As told to Frederick Painton

WHEN THE American troops retreated in Bataan, in February 1942, my daughter Diane and I went with them, trying to stay near my husband, who was in the army. Overrun by the Japs, we fled to the hills, where we lived like hunted beasts. Diane had bad attacks of malaria and needed medical care. In desperation I smuggled her into Manila, where we were sheltered by Judge Roxas, a relative of my former husband, Diane's father.

During those terrible months in the hills I developed a red hatred for the Japanese. I told Judge Roxas I was going to spy on them. My plan was to open a night club on the waterfront where I could watch shipping and troop movements, and get information from Japanese customers. Judge Roxas tried to dissuade me. He said I was sure to be caught and executed.

But I had seen enough of the Japanese to have utter contempt for their files and organization. For two months I had worked as a singer under the name Madame Dot in Anna Fey's night club—right under Japanese noses—and they had suspected nothing. Olive-skinned with black hair, I passed as Italian-born, married to a Filipino. While I was at Anna Fey's I studied the Manila night clubs and the Japanese character, and decided that, if I charged outrageous prices and catered only to high Jap officials and army and navy brass hats: I could make a go of it.

I pawned a diamond ring and a wrist watch for sufficient pesos to

make a start. I chose a house in the Ermica section where I could watch ship movements in the harbour. I named the place the Tsubaki Club. The word "club" in Japanese signified exclusive, and *tsubaki* means camellia, which to the Japanese means delicate and difficult to get. Fely Cucuarra, a Filipino girl, was my chief performer. She knew my plan and saved my life many times.

On opening night, 15th October 1942, I stood at the door. As a Japanese officer entered, I bowed my head very slowly and said, "*Kombara*," meaning a very polite good evening. Then I would lead the officer to a table and he would select a hostess. Most night clubs in Manila gave one floor show weekly; I had one every night. Fely sang Japanese songs, sang love songs, Filipino boys and girls performed native dances.

I had my troubles. At first the Japanese would make determined passes at me and the hostesses, and frequently would slap our faces when we told them it wasn't that kind of place. But gradually, as I built up a better and better clientele, this trouble eased. Customers complained at first of the high prices. I told them "it is necessary to pay to be so exclusive." You could see them swell with satisfaction.

Often young officers would drink beer, then smash the bottle on the floor and walk out without paying. Once a brutal officer broke a beer bottle over a hostess's head. The Japanese had a rigid order that all cases of misconduct or destruction of property by officers should be reported. I deliberately refrained from making complaints: I wanted to build goodwill.

The Japanese had a stringent rule against dancing, which they regarded as disrespectful to the war effort. Nevertheless officers would often force the hostesses to dance. One night a military policeman walked in, crossed the floor to a captain who was dancing and slapped his face. The captain reddened, but merely turned off the floor. I was panicky because the Japanese could now close down the place, and all my efforts would be for naught. Fely whispered, "You leave this to me."

She and a major told the MP that we had protested but had been

forced to yield. The major did a little bribing. The MP tore up the complaint and from then on I was trusted. They came back night after night, and I was making money. It was time to get to work.

I made contact with Captain John Boone, commanding the guerrillas in the Bataan military district. My code name was High Pockets, and my information was coded in food terms. If it was important, he'd write "Beans delicious." If the news was stale, he'd write "Cabbage spoiled on arrival."

The first messenger we used was caught and shot. The second survived. He had a pair of double-soled shoes and we could put the message between the soles. Or we would split the centre banana in a bunch, put a message inside, and fasten the skin back.

Once a month I sent Boone packages of food and medicine and all routine information. If I got anything urgent, I had a Filipino waiter who would race into the hills at once. My orders were to report the movements of all Japanese vessels and the destination of Japanese troops moving through.

A naval captain, skipper of a Red Cross hospital ship, came in one night. He got very drunk, and told how he had just arrived from Bougainville with many troops. I asked, "Wounded?"

He laughed loudly and replied, "Only a few slightly wounded. All the rest are first-class troops. We knew the stupid Americans must let a Red Cross ship go unmolested."

I sent information to the hills that night that the Japanese used hospital ships as troop transport. This captain also told me all badly wounded were killed and buried. He said the men were as good as dead and anyway it would save them from torture by the Americans.

One night I was sitting with a Japanese officer. He said, "Haven't I seen you somewhere before?" I thought he meant at Anna Fey's and I started to answer, "Oh, you mean before——" A brutal blow of his fist knocked me to the floor. He said angrily, "Always you people say 'before Japanese came.' Degenerate Americans gone for ever. There is only Japanese new order now. Remember that."

A few times I knew the result of my work. The captain of an

aircraft-carrier liked Fely's singing. At his farewell party, Fely slyly asked him where she should write. He said he was going to Singapore and then to Rabaul. I got that information off post-haste. Months later one of his officers told Fely, "Your sweetheart is no more. Most on that ship are no more." We shed a crocodile tear.

One night the Japanese commander of a submarine flotilla took a fancy to me. He had seen a fan dance in San Francisco, and now he asked me to do the dance. I said, "You return tomorrow night." We made two fans of split bamboo and tissue paper. Fely sewed me some flesh-coloured tights and I arranged a dim reddish spotlight. The commander came with forty of his officers and they almost lost their eyesight straining to see if I was really naked. He came again the next night with more of his officers. "You do fan dance," he said. "Tomorrow sunrise we sail for the Solomons."

I did the fan dance with great success and sent off word to the hills. Months later an officer came to the club and told me that he was one of the few survivors of the flotilla.

Meanwhile, I tried to make contact with someone in Cabanatuan prison camp in order to help my husband. We had proof that Red Cross packages sent there were not given but sold to the men. I was making lots of money and I wanted to help my husband. I made contact, only to be stunned by the news, "Your husband died two weeks ago. The Japanese said malaria—but he starved."

Chaplains Robert Taylor and Frank Tiffany (both to die with 1,600 others when a Japanese prison ship was torpedoed *en route* to Japan) wrote to me about the prisoners' urgent need. So I joined what was known as Group U, to send messages, money, food and medicine into the camp. We unravelled bedspreads and knitted the thread into socks. We even made medicine. Beriberi and scurvy were prevalent because the prisoners lacked the citrus vitamin. So we bought calamansis, native oranges, and boiled them down with sugar. We sent the concentrated juice to the camp in demi-johns. The guards we bribed with watches, pens and cameras.

A hundred messages with up to 20,000 pesos would go at a time.

This running of supplies into Cabanatuan was my ultimate undoing. On the morning of 23rd May 1944, I was sitting at breakfast, grief-stricken and uneasy because I had just been told that Rammon, one of the Cabanatuan messengers, had been captured. Suddenly four Japanese military policemen raced into the room. I jumped up. Two of them jammed revolver muzzles into my ribs.

"Where all your papers?" cried one. "You spy!" My heart sank, my throat got so dry I couldn't swallow. Spies are shot or, more often decapitated. They blindfolded me and led me to a guardroom. Later, the investigation began, with me still blindfolded.

A voice said, as if out of a spy film, "You might as well come clean, High Pockets. We know everything." The word High Pockets struck me numb. They had intercepted a letter. But to whom? Boone? If so, I was as good as dead.

He began to read a letter of mine to Chaplain Tiffany and I knew now that the messenger had been captured.

Suddenly he said, "Who is Cal?"

I replied that it was an abbreviation for calamansi. That letter had said we were running short of demijohns and I had asked Chaplain Tiffany to return all he had.

To my amazement, they didn't believe me. I was kicked and beaten. "Answer who is this Cal and who is Demijohn?"

Desperately I repeated again and again that "demijohn" was jug and "calamansi" was orange.

"We no fools!" cried the inquisitor. "Cal is code word and John is American name. Tell me what you say to this Demijohn."

I screamed at him again. Hands seized me. I was stretched out, bound hand and foot and head tied rigidly. Suddenly a garden hose was held to my mouth and nostrils. This was the water treatment and it is just like drowning, only horrifying. Of course I passed out. I regained my senses crying out with agony. They were pressing lighted cigarettes to the inside of my legs. "Who is Mister Demijohn and what is Cal?" I cried out a repetition.

"So you want more water?"

Before they got the nozzle of the hose in my mouth I yelled, "Look demijohn up in a dictionary." Then water poured into my mouth and nostrils and I died all over again.

But when I regained my senses they stopped the inquisition. Every Japanese officer carries a pocket Japanese-English dictionary and they had found I was right. So they went out and the guard took off the blindfold.

I was left alone in that room for three weeks. I was given three cups of water daily and one cup of rice. One day when the Jap was mopping the corridor outside my cell I made signs that I wanted water to wash my filthy garments. He raised the pail filled with grey, sour soapsuds and hurled it in my face. With matted hair, dirt thick on me, lice and fleas, I sat on the floor. I grew weak from lack of food, and flesh melted off me, and the cigarette burns festered and made scars I'll bear to my grave. I mumbled to myself to hear my voice and know I lived.

At the end of three weeks I was moved to Santiago prison and placed in an eight-by-ten-foot cell with eleven other women. At the end of three months, in which each hour passed like a century, an officer I'd seen in the club passed the window. I called to him. I said I was going mad and wanted to know if he could have my case examined so that I could have an end to this living hell.

At 2 a.m. (the Japs like to take you out of a sound sleep, thinking you will soften up) I was taken to the inquisitors. Here I was told that the original letters in my case had been lost, but they had others. In one I had been plain stupid, for I had written, "Here I am, an American running a Japanese night club."

The inquisitor was furious at me, grinding his teeth and yelling, "You thief, you reach in Japanese pockets and rob them of money to buy things for degenerate Americans."

They tortured me by putting the point of a nail under my fingernail and hitting the nail with a hammer. One frightful shock of pain tears through you to your toes and you're out cold. Even if I had wanted to answer their questions, I was incapable of it now.

A week later, I was taken blindfolded to the old Spanish torture chamber under Santiago. Here the blindfold was removed and I saw a Japanese officer with a glittering drawn sword. He ordered me to kneel down. I felt the edge of the sword laid against my neck.

"Say a prayer," he said, "for this is your end."

I might have flinched, but I was incapable of movement. There was only silence, and time flowing like a gushing torrent, and I praying. Then the officer's voice said, "You brave woman. You expected tell names. You no tell, so we must believe you——"

I never heard the end of his speech. I fell forward fainting.

Three days later they took me to Fort McKinley for a formal court-martial. When I tried to defend myself, a blow broke off half a tooth. "You required say only you guilty, not guilty," said a voice. I said guilty to get it over with, and was immediately sentenced to be shot as a spy.

Each night as I lay on the floor in Bilibid Prison I thought, "This night they will come to take me out and shoot me." After a while I was no longer afraid. This went on until 22nd November 1944.

Then, to my amazement, I was taken out for a new trial. This time the charge was not espionage but "acts harmful to the Imperial Japanese Government." Asked how I pleaded, I stumbled over "guilty," I was so anxious to say it. I was thereupon sentenced to twenty years hard labour.

The next day I was taken to a women's prison and by contrast it was like heaven. We starved, we ate boiled banana leaves and horrible cassava. But we worked at gardening under a kindly Filipino who asked only that we make a showing for the weekly inspection by Japanese officers. My flesh was slowly healing and so was my mind. Then came that blessed day, 10th February 1945, when the liberating army came in. I went forth barefooted and ragged, but happy in my liberty and the hope of seeing my Diane and my native land again.

Condensed from The American Mercury

The End of the Scharnhorst

By C. S. Forester

PERHAPS THE NAZIS knew about the presence of that convoy, making its way to Murmansk round the most northerly point of Norway. Perhaps the *Scharnhorst* was sent out into the arctic night on the mere chance of striking against something. At any rate, out she went from her Norwegian fiord, wearing at her masthead the flag of Rear-Admiral Bey.

For the purposes of a raid, this 26,000-ton battle-cruiser had all the desirable qualities. Designed for a speed of twenty-nine knots, she was faster than any British battleship. With nine eleven-inch guns she was more powerful than any British cruiser. And her enormous secondary armament would ensure that if she once got into a convoy she would sink ships faster than a fox killing chickens in a henhouse.

She left on the afternoon of Christmas Day and, at precisely the right time, just when the gloomy northern sea was beginning to be faintly illumined by the next dawn, she made her contact with the convoy. There was up to half a million tons of shipping there. It was possible for her, in the next hour, to do as much damage as the whole U-boat navy could achieve in six months.

The British convoy was heading east some 150 miles north of North Cape. It was guarded against submarine attack by a ring of corvettes and destroyers—small craft. To guard against attack by surface vessels, Admiral Robert Burnett had three cruisers, *Belfast*, *Norfolk*

and *Sheffield*. He had stationed his squadron to the south-east of the convoy, and it was from the south-east that Bey arrived.

The *Scharnhorst* and the British escort sighted each other at six miles. Aboard the British ships, the radar had been watching over their safety. It had given the first alarm, and was now reporting just where this intruder, this almost certain enemy, was to be found and whither she was headed. The guns were training in accordance with its observations, and the gunnery officers awaiting the moment to open fire. In obedience to the commodore's orders, the convoy turned itself about while the *Norfolk*, the *Sheffield* and the *Belfast* went dashing forward to meet the enemy.

In a broadside the *Scharnhorst* could fire rather more than the weight of shells that could be fired by all three cruisers put together. It would be a fortunate light cruiser that could sustain a hit from one of her eleven-inch shells and live through it, while the armour over her own vitals would keep out the cruisers' shells at all but the closest range. Mathematically, the approaching conflict was unfair. Yet the three cruisers flung themselves upon the *Scharnhorst*.

In the twilight of that arctic morning the glittering white bow-wave flung up by the speeding *Scharnhorst* could be seen even when her grey upper works were invisible. A gun was fired in the British squadron and a star shell traced a curve of white light before it burst fairly over the battle-cruiser, lighting up the sea for a mile round her. As it hung in the sky from its parachute the cruisers' guns opened fire.

The shells went screaming on their mission, and the spotting officer of the *Norfolk*, through his glasses, saw, just at that very second when the *Norfolk's* shells should land, a vivid green flash from the *Scharnhorst's* black hull. The *Norfolk* carried eight-inch guns, the other cruisers only six-inch. There was a chance that the *Scharnhorst* had been hurt.

The *Scharnhorst* spun about rapidly, so that the next salvo missed. Then she dashed out of the illuminated circle, and vanished into the twilight. Rear-Admiral Bey is dead now. We shall never know

what the motives were that induced him to turn away. It is not likely that a man could rise to admiral's rank in the German Navy if he were of the stuff that flinches. Bey was probably acting on a plan he had devised long beforehand. It was the convoy he was after. He knew now where the main defences of the convoy were, and could guess with some accuracy where the merchant ships themselves were to be found. He could circle away, losing himself in the gloom, and make a fresh stab.

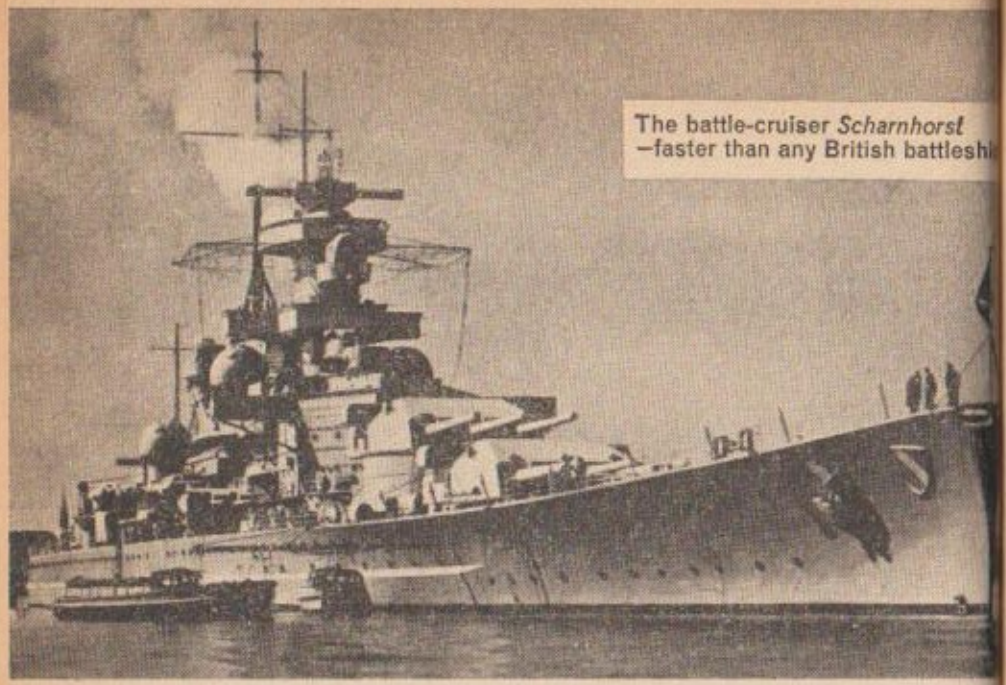
Admiral Burnett, aboard the *Belfast*, had to guess what Bey would do next, where and when he would attack the convoy. A thirty-knot battleship could circle the whole convoy in an hour. It might dash in from any direction, and in ten minutes sink many merchant vessels. So there was no margin whatever for miscalculation on the part of Burnett, standing there on the crowded bridge of the *Belfast*, as she steamed at top speed over the heaving sea.

At 12.30—three hours after the first contact from the south-east—the *Scharnhorst* re-appeared from the north-east. She found Burnett and his cruisers right in her path. It was an extraordinary achievement on Burnett's part. What Bey thought of this apparition of three indomitable cruisers, when by all the laws of chance they should have been twenty miles away, can be guessed from his actions. There was a sudden flurry of salvoes, during which a shell burst on the *Norfolk's* stern, and then Bey turned and ran for home.

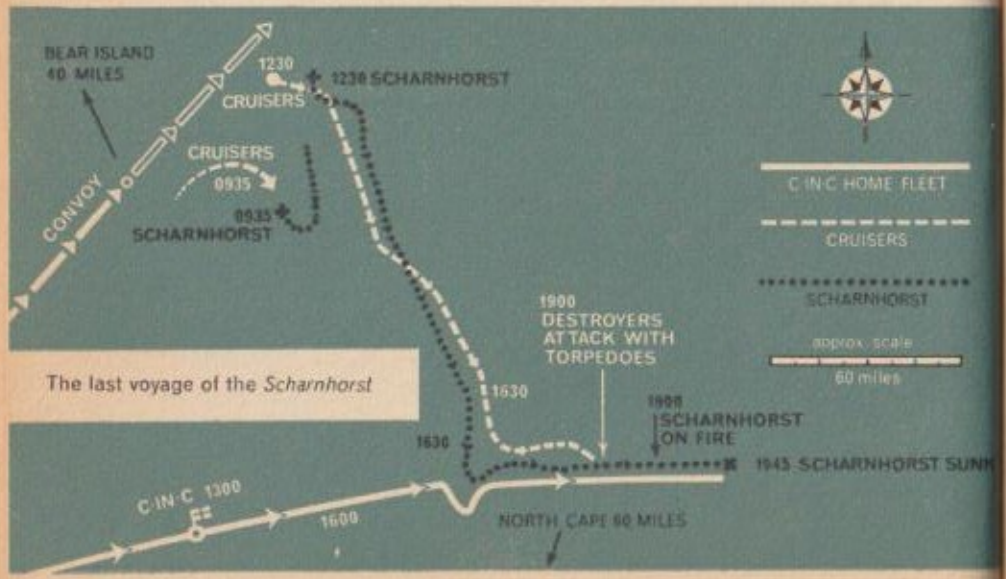
He could not doubt that three hours ago hurried messages had been broadcast to the Admiralty and to the main British fleet; nor could he doubt that the British were straining every nerve to send ships and aircraft to attack a ship as valuable as the *Scharnhorst*.

As a matter of fact there was far more risk than he knew. Some 150 miles to the south-west of him and steaming fast to cut him off, was a force which could make scrap iron of his ship. This was the *Duke of York* with her attendant cruiser, the *Jamaica*, and her screen of four destroyers. From her masthead flew the St. George's cross of a full admiral—Sir Bruce Fraser,* commander of the Home Fleet.

* *Later Lord Fraser of North Cape*



The battle-cruiser *Scharnhorst* —faster than any British battleshi



The last voyage of the *Scharnhorst*

Few people know how many times the Royal Navy had set that trap, how many times a battleship force had plodded along to Russia on a course parallel to, but well away from, that of the convoy, in the hope of intercepting any Nazi force sent out from Norway. This was the first time that patience was to be rewarded.

The *Duke of York* had been about 200 miles away when Burnett's first message came. The enemy had an advantage in speed of several knots. Fraser had to be sure of being able to interpose between the *Scharnhorst* and her base; any mere pursuit was doomed to failure before it started. He headed towards the strategical centre of gravity—the nearest point of a straight line between the *Scharnhorst's* last known position and the German base.

When the next news came from Burnett, after the *Scharnhorst* had made her second appearance, Fraser knew her exact position again. She was still 150 miles away.

It was time for Burnett to distinguish himself once more. The *Scharnhorst*, after scoring her hit on the *Norfolk*, had headed south through the twilight. Burnett swung his ships in pursuit. It was of the utmost importance that Fraser should be kept informed of the German's course. So Burnett had to keep in touch with the *Scharnhorst*, but to keep in touch with a ship that mounts eleven-inch guns is more easily asked than done. Those guns were capable of hitting a target clean over the horizon.

All during that anxious afternoon Fraser did nothing to reveal his position. One whisper from his radio and the *Scharnhorst* would know of the presence of another British force to the south. Then at 4.30 all doubts were suddenly resolved. The *Duke of York* broke her radio silence with an order from Fraser to Burnett to "illuminate the enemy with star shell." Then they knew that Fraser was very close—the *Duke of York's* navigating officers had done a neat job. Counting every turn of their ship's propellers, allowing for wind and current, deducing the *Scharnhorst's* position and course from Burnett's reports, they had accurately tracked down their quarry.

It was quite dark. The *Scharnhorst* was on Fraser's port bow, and

the *Belfast* was eight miles astern of the Nazi ship. A streak of white fire shot from one of the *Belfast's* guns and soared against the black sky. The shell burst high up, and then the huge flare blazed out.

Right in the centre of that blaze of light was the *Scharnhorst*, and the look-outs and spotters and gunnery officers in Fraser's force saw her upper works standing out boldly against the horizon. Five fourteen-inch guns roared out with the incredible din of their kind and sent three and a half tons of steel and high explosive at their mark. For a score of seconds the shells rumbled through the air.

Then they landed, flinging up 200-foot splashes, and so closely had the range been estimated that this first salvo was registered as a "straddle." The next, half a minute later, recorded a hit. Bey turned his ship sharply to port, and sent her wildly seeking safety in the eastward darkness. After her plunged the *Duke of York*. The *Scharnhorst* was hit and hit again, but was not wounded sufficiently to make any immediate difference to her speed. Before 6.30 she was out of range, battered, on fire, but safe from the *Duke of York*.

But hardly had the *Duke of York* ceased fire when a new blaze of gunfire lit the horizon. The *Scharnhorst* was having to defend herself against other enemies. The four destroyers of the *Duke of York's* screen had overhauled her—the *Savage* and *Saumarez* on the starboard side, the *Scorpion* and *Stord* (the last, a vessel of the Norwegian Navy) on the port side. They were dashing in, two on either bow, and just in the nick of time to prevent Bey's escape.

The *Scharnhorst* opened fire with all the guns of her secondary battery. From a spectacular point of view her defence was dramatic enough. She was one vast glow from the orange-red flames of her guns, and from this central nucleus radiated the innumerable streaks of tracer shells. But destroyers charging in at forty knots are hard to stop. Moreover, the *Scharnhorst* had been hard hit, with almost certain damage to her guns and communications system. Her fire was singularly ineffective. Only the *Saumarez* was hit. The destroyers pressed home their attack to the uttermost limit. They did not loose their torpedoes at 10,000 yards, nor at 6,000 yards, which

is the nearest a destroyer can hope to approach a well-defended capital ship. They pressed in to 2,000 yards and less, launched their torpedoes, and then sheered away from the doomed battleship.

Several of the torpedoes struck home, but the *Scharnhorst* survived and maintained a tremendous volume of fire, comparatively ill-directed but impressive. One advantage which the German Navy possessed was clearly demonstrated at this crisis. As the weaker naval power, she had never had to design her ships for ability to stay at sea for long periods of time; swift and sudden blows were all she expected of them, with the result that habitability was not considered a necessity. They could lie in harbour with their crews on shore in barracks most of their time, so that they could be compartmented in a fashion impossible to British ships.

The *Scharnhorst*, however, had lost speed, and now the *Duke of York* came up in range again, and the fourteen-inch guns began to smash her to pieces. The *Duke of York's* attendant cruiser, *Jamaica*, closed to point-blank range. At the same time there arrived on the scene Burnett's three cruisers and four destroyers from the convoy escort. In the pitch darkness eight destroyers, four cruisers and a battleship were tearing round the *Scharnhorst*. It was time for the master hand to take control again. The signal sent out by the commander-in-chief was in plain English, owing to the urgency of the occasion: "Clear the area of the target except for those ships with torpedoes and one destroyer with searchlight."

All the ships but two sheered away. One destroyer trained her searchlights on the wreck and the *Jamaica* came in for the kill. She swung round and a salvo of torpedoes leaped from her deck. There were tremendous explosions when they hit the mark. When the smoke cleared away, the *Scharnhorst* was revealed for the last time, on her side, with the flames of her ammunition fires still spouting from her. Then the smoke closed round her again and she went to the bottom, while the British cruisers raced to pick up survivors.

Condensed from The Saturday Evening Post

The Man Who Saved London

By George Kent

It was October 1943—the fifth year of the war—and Michel Hollard, a small, muscular, forty-five-year-old Frenchman, was getting ready to slip across the border into neutral Switzerland. Over his shoulder was a sack of potatoes, in his hands an axe. To all appearances he was a woodcutter. The morning sun filtered through the trees as he moved swiftly forward, more like a cat than a human being. Even a small noise could mean death, for in the woods and behind the hills were cocked listening ears—ears of German patrols, of German police dogs.

Hollard, an industrial designer who, to help his country, had become a spy, had made the crossing into Switzerland forty-nine times in all. Each time he carried military information to be relayed to Britain. He and his helpers had pin-pointed secret Nazi airfields in France, located coastal gun batteries, discovered a plan for a submarine base at Boulogne, reported the movements of entire divisions—all intelligence of great value. None of these secrets, however, compared with the one he was carrying now.

This time, concealed among the potatoes was a paper which was not only to save London from total destruction but was also to shorten the war by many months. Hollard was carrying a blueprint of the launching sites for Hitler's terrible new flying bomb, the V-1.

It was Hitler's idea to drop 50,000 V-1's on London, at the rate of 5,000 a month. The preparations for their launching had been

enveloped in the thickest secrecy. Mostly conscripted Dutch and Polish labourers, who could speak no French, were employed in the construction of the launching ramps. These ramps were nearing completion in more than 100 places.

Now Michel Hollard, the only man among the Allies who knew the details of the plan, was closing in on the border. He began to run. Soon he was at the rolls of barbed wire that separated France and Switzerland. He had thrown his axe and sack across when suddenly his knee was seized in an iron vice—the jaws of a huge German police dog. The dog simply stood there and held. Hollard could not move. Yet he knew he had to move, for certainly the men who worked with the dog were in the near vicinity.

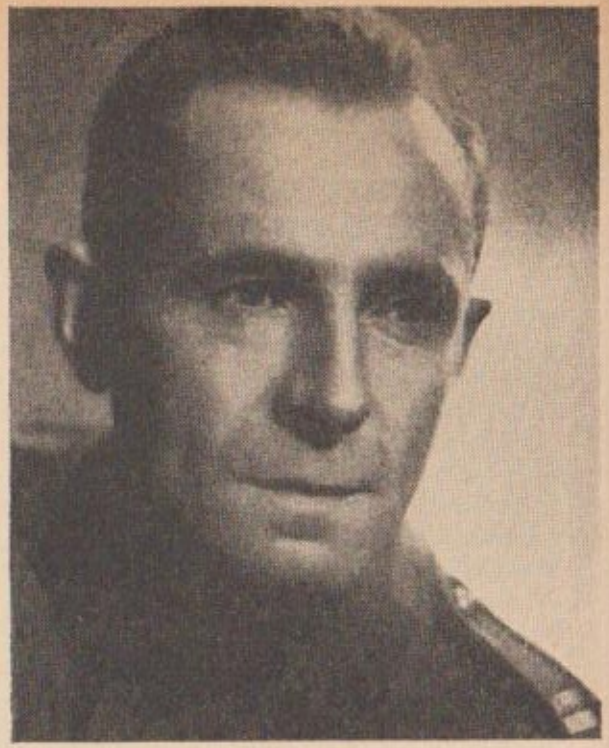
He carried no weapons. In his pose as a simple countryman, the possession of a weapon would arouse suspicion if he were searched. In panic, Hollard looked round for something with which to prise the dog's mouth open. There, providentially, was precisely what he needed—a long, sturdy stick. Working it between the animal's jaws, he thrust it deep into the windpipe. For a long minute nothing happened. Then the dog relaxed and rolled over dead.

As Hollard wriggled through the wire and snatched up his sack, he saw a Swiss guard with a gun at his shoulder. He was pointing it not at Hollard, however, but at two German soldiers who were about to shoot Hollard. The Germans lowered their rifles and walked away, muttering.

Not long after Hollard's eventful crossing, Allied bombers began striking at the V-1 emplacements. In five weeks, seventy-three of the sites were either totally destroyed or so badly damaged that they could not be used again. Though others were built—smaller ones—the Nazis' grand plan for leaving London in ruins was shattered. Hitler succeeded in dropping not 50,000 bombs but only about 2,000. And they fell not at the end of 1943, when their impact might have been fatal, but in the middle of 1944—too few and too late.

"It seems likely," wrote Dwight D. Eisenhower in his book, *Crusade in Europe*, "that if the Germans had succeeded in perfecting

Michel Hollard smuggled a blueprint of a V-1 launching site out of France



A flying bomb takes off. Hitler hoped to launch 5,000 a month

London's ack-ack barrage opens up, and a crashing V-1 traces a vivid white arc across the night sky

An RAF bomb (circled) heads for a near-miss on a launching ramp. Heavy raids on V-1 emplacements followed Michel Hollard's spying mission

British troops found this scuttled flying-bomb launching ramp near Amiens in northern France

and using these new weapons six months earlier than they did, our invasion of Europe would have proved exceedingly difficult, perhaps impossible."

The amazing part of this story is that Michel Hollard, who became one of the war's most remarkable spies, did so strictly on his own initiative. No one asked him to become a spy, nor helped him to become one. When he had information to deliver, he simply crossed the border into Switzerland. He had no radio, no parachute drops, no system of internal couriers.

Michel Hollard was the simplest of men, an underpaid employee of a research organization. When the Germans marched into Paris and his employers began working for them, he felt that a turning-point had come. He resigned from his job in protest and got a new one as agent for a manufacturer of charcoal-burning gas generators for cars. This work was to prove invaluable, for it explained his frequent visits to wooded areas near the frontier—he was hunting for wood for charcoal.

One day he tried to sneak across the heavily guarded Swiss border to offer his services as a spy to the British. He was captured by the Germans, but he talked his way out. The second time he got across. The British asked him to identify German troop units and to report on their movements. For the next three years Hollard was almost constantly on the run. He had a wife and three children whom he loved, but he saw them seldom, lest they suffer on his account. Over the months he recruited a number of Frenchmen to help him: railway workers, lorry drivers, barmen, hotel-keepers.

From a nucleus of five, his organization, *Réseau Agir*—Network for Action—grew until towards the end it numbered 120. Of these, twenty were captured and put to death by the Germans. Others suffered injuries and had some incredibly narrow escapes.

Hollard's most important achievement—tracking down the V-1 plans—began in a café in Rouen in August 1943. One of his agents there reported hearing two building contractors talk of some unusual construction work being carried out by the Germans. What

amazed them was the extraordinary amount of concrete involved.

A day later Hollard was in Rouen. Clad in sober black, he walked into the official employment office, saying that he represented a Protestant organization interested in the spiritual welfare of labouring men. He produced several Bibles and asked if there were any building enterprises in the region. He was told that there was one at Auffay, about twenty miles from Rouen.

An hour later he was at Auffay, wearing workman's blues. Four main roads led out of the town. He tried three, but drew blanks. On the fourth, he came upon a large clearing and several hundred men. Concrete was being poured; buildings were going up.

Hollard seized a wheelbarrow, loaded it with bricks and pitched in. No one stopped him. Most of the labourers could speak no French. Those who could told him they were building garages. This was obviously not true. The buildings were too small. Besides, why garages miles from the nearest city?

What fascinated him most was a fifty-yard strip of concrete with a long guideline of blue string. Taking out his compass, he discovered that the strip pointed directly towards London. When he learned that the Germans were working the labourers in three shifts, round the clock, he left to report to the British.

In London, the Allied leaders were deeply concerned over what the Germans were doing. Hints had come from Peenemünde of some kind of "pilotless plane" being developed; and on a beach on the island of Bornholm in the Baltic a Dane had discovered the wreckage of a curious weapon that had apparently descended from the sky. A new blitz appeared to be in the making, but what it would be and how serious, no one knew.

Hollard and four agents, equipped with maps, now began a systematic tour of northern France on bicycles. Cycling round one place, getting information about others by talking to people, they discovered in three weeks more than sixty of the mysterious sites. In the next few weeks they found forty more, all in a corridor nearly 200 miles long, thirty miles wide, roughly parallel to the

coast—and all of them pointing at London! But what were they?

In espionage, luck frequently plays an important role, and it was a series of coincidences that led Hollard to Hitler's best-kept secret. Hollard was conferring one day with one of his agents, who warmly recommended a friend. This was a youth named Robert, who wanted to get in some jabs against the Germans. Hollard got Robert a job at an airfield. Robert, in turn, persuaded a friend, André, to volunteer for a job which eventually took him to Bois Carré, another place where the strange building was going on. One week after taking up his new position, André reported to Hollard with tracings of plans that had passed through his hands. In passing them along, he said that they were the last he would give to Hollard. He explained that the Germans had made him sign an agreement not to reveal what he was doing.

Hollard is gentle. He had won the co-operation of others by appealing to them as patriotic Frenchmen. This time he got tough. He *ordered* André to get a tracing of the master plan at any cost.

André agreed to co-operate. At Bois Carré, the German in charge kept the master plan in an inside pocket of his overcoat—and he wore the overcoat even in his office. The only time he took it off was at nine o'clock in the morning, when he left to go to the toilet.

For several days André timed the German's morning absences. They varied between three and five minutes. So one day when the German shed his coat, André dodged in, made a tracing of the plan, and was back at his desk by the time the German returned.

At the end of the week, following Hollard's suggestions and using medicine that had been given him, he complained of severe stomach pains. The German doctor scoffed, but when André began vomiting, he signed a pass enabling André to go to Paris to see his "family doctor."

In Paris, André and Hollard began co-ordinating the tracing from the master plan with the other plans that *Réseau Agir* had obtained. Then they checked their drawings against on-the-spot observations. It was a colossal job, but at last they had all the pieces in position,

and there it was in beautiful detail—the layout of a V-1 base.

This was the paper that lay among the potatoes when the German police dog seized Hollard's leg at the frontier.

After Hollard had delivered this prize, a wire came from London, reading, "Booty received safely. Congratulations." Then the reaction set in. Hollard was tired—tired of being on the run, tired of living every minute with fear. The British practically insisted that he linger in Switzerland, and he was tempted. Then he thought of station-masters listing train movements at the risk of their lives, of men sneaking into aircraft hangars and shipyards, of others sitting in church steeples watching German manoeuvres.

He went back to France where, a few months later, because of a slip by a colleague, he was captured in a *bistro*. He was tortured horribly, but he gave the Germans no information. Because no proof of complicity was found on him, he was not shot but was condemned to the Neuengamme concentration camp.

As the war neared its end, the Germans emptied the camp, drove the prisoners into the holds of vessels and set them adrift in the North Sea, confident that they would be sunk by Allied bombers. Hollard, locked up with hundreds of others, was miraculously transferred at the last moment from one of the doomed vessels to a ship of the Swedish Red Cross.

It took six weeks of hospital care before Hollard was able to get about. The RAF sent a plane to take him to London, where he was to receive the highest British military decoration for which a foreigner is eligible, the Distinguished Service Order. But Hollard was already homeward bound, and had to be decorated later, in Paris. "No one can doubt that Hollard was entitled to the highest decoration for bravery," says Sir Brian Horrocks. "He was, literally, the man who saved London."

Based on the book "Agent Extraordinary," © 1960 by George Martelli and Michel Hollard, and published by Collins, London

'Wingate's Circus'

The Record of a Fantastic Raid

By Charles Rolo

In 1943 eight British columns secretly crossed from India through the Japanese lines into Burma and for three months spread confusion and panic. The Japanese buzzed about like bees out of an overturned hive, but never caught up with the raiders. The expedition wiped out Japanese outposts, exploded ammunition dumps, wrecked airfields, put roads out of commission, blew up bridges and dynamited the railway.

The raiders were the Chindits, named after the dragons which guard Burmese temples; their leader was Brigadier Orde Wingate. Having penetrated 300 miles into Japanese-held territory, the columns then made a heroic march back to India. Casualties were fewer than anyone had dared predict. It is one of the great romantic tales of the war.

The expedition accomplished important aims. It relieved pressure on the Chinese; it gathered information which enabled the RAF to make devastating raids; it tied up the Japanese and probably staved off an invasion of India. Above all, it set a pattern of training and tactics for the reconquest of Burma. Gurkhas, Burmese and a regiment of city-bred Englishmen showed the Japanese that they were no longer masters of the jungle.

Wingate's British Chindits were nearly all married men from the North of England, aged twenty-eight to thirty-five. Wingate told them, "We have to imitate Tarzan." For six sweltering months in

the Indian jungles he trained them in river crossing, infiltration tactics and long forced marches with heavy packs, until they were the toughest of shock troops. On returning from the raid one private remarked, "The whole job was a piece of cake compared to the training."

Officers, too, were put through an interminable course of tactical exercises, not on the conventional sand table but outdoors. In Burma, later on, these officers found that they had rehearsed every situation they met.

Field-Marshal Wavell inspected the Chindits when they were about to leave India, and as a gesture of respect saluted them before they could salute him. He knew—and every man knew—that any member of the expedition who was wounded or sick would probably be left to the Japanese.

The half-mile-wide Chindwin River, the boundary between British- and Japanese-held territory, was the first critical lap in the advance. Reconnaissance parties reported no enemy patrols for some miles. Heavy equipment was ferried over in sampans, rubber boats and canoes; officers and men stripped and swam the swift current. The crossing continued all night, through the next day, and far into that night. Wingate tossed his helmet into the last canoe, peeled off his clothes and plunged into the swirling water.

The Chindits pushed through dense jungle, over razor-back mountains, along narrow paths flanked by precipices and then down into valleys where elephant grass grows taller than a man. Skeletons marked the tracks over which the Allies had retreated the summer before.

Wingate kept clear of beaten trails, hacking his own path through the jungle. He sent out "deception groups" to lay false trails, but mainly relied on speed of movement. Japanese patrols were often so close that scouts would bump into each other in the jungle. Skirmishing was almost continuous, and the Chindits killed more than 1,000 Japanese. But the enemy never caught up with them in force.

Often the Chindits covered thirty miles a day in a temperature

of 105 in the shade. Wingate saw to it that not one moment was wasted. He forbade shaving because it would mean ten minutes less sleep. He had a theory that sickness could be kept down by constant marching—and it is a fact that there was hardly a case of malaria.

At the head of each column trotted scouting dogs, trained to recognize the scent of the Japanese. The eight prongs of the expedition kept in constant touch with one another by radio, messenger dogs, carrier pigeons and strange bird-calls. Elephants, ridden by little Burmese mahouts, plodded ahead with the mortars, Bren guns, folding boats and wireless sets. Next came the horses and men; then the mules. In the rear were oxen and bullocks drawing carts loaded with machine-guns, grenades, rifles and ammunition. Each column was a mile long. "Looks like Noah's Ark," said one Chindit as the weird assortment of animals clambered up the banks of a river. Strangely enough, the columns could not be heard 200 yards away, for the jungle deadens sound.

The Chindits had rubber-soled hockey shoes, Australian-type slouch hats, anti-mosquito veils and machetes. Each man entered Burma with six days paratroop rations on his back and thereafter was supplied from the air. All told, the expedition received 220 tons of airborne supplies.

An RAF flying officer marched with each column to select sites for dropping the supplies—rice fields, dried-up river beds, tracts of flattened elephant grass. Code messages notified the air base in Assam of the exact time and place for the next delivery. Smoke fires guided the aircraft in daytime, flares at night. The big planes would swoop as low as 150 feet to release their loads of arms, ammunition, dynamite, and rations of bully-beef, biscuits, dates, raisins, tea, sugar, salt and vitamin-C tablets. The only breakage was of one bottle of rum.

The RAF made a valiant attempt to give the columns any special items they requested—a biography of Bernard Shaw, a bottle of Irish whiskey for St. Patrick's Day, monocles, false teeth and a kilt were odd items asked for and sent. Two volunteer wireless operators

came by air to replace sick men. One officer, his column surrounded by Japanese, had the RAF drop a will for him to sign. Calcutta's leading restaurant worked all night to make 400 pounds of chocolate the troops asked for; next morning it was flown 700 miles into Burma.

The base officer in charge of supplies was a Captain Lord. One day Wingate radioed, "Oh, Lord, send us bread!" and got the prompt reply, "The Lord hath heard thy prayer." A few hours later sixty loaves—manna from heaven—were dropped.

A Chindit raiding party came upon the headquarters of a Japanese unit, deserted except for servants busily preparing dinner. The Burmese obligingly waited on Wingate's men, who polished off every scrap of food in the camp.

The expedition penetrated within 120 miles of the Burma Road, and was then ordered to return. When the columns got back to the Irrawaddy—it was a bitterly cold night with a brilliant moon—the Japanese opened up with mortars and machine-guns. Wingate could have forced a crossing, but it would have meant heavy losses. Standing on a sandbank in the Irrawaddy, looking like some minor prophet with his huge beard, and a blanket wrapped round his shoulders, he made a split-second decision. He ordered the Chindits to break up into groups of forty and play hide-and-seek in the jungle until they had given the Japanese the slip. Within forty-eight hours every party had managed to cross the river safely. Then they buried their wireless sets, smashed their heavy equipment and set off on the 300-mile trek to India.

Without radios, no more airborne supplies were possible. The Chindits first ate their bullocks and mules, and after that lived on rice, snakes, vultures, banana palms, jungle roots and grass soup. Hunted every yard of the way, they were forced to avoid the main drinking places, and sometimes went for days with only a few mouthfuls of water drained out of hollow bamboos. Knowing that their security lay in speed, Wingate drove his men without mercy.

When it was all over the expedition became affectionately known as "Wingate's Circus," "Wingate's Follies," or "Wingate's Mob."

The officers were a queer bunch—tough commando types. "Mad Mike" Calvert—"Dynamite Mike"—was a booby-trap expert and a wrecker, an artist whose eyes took on a holy look as he talked of dynamiting.

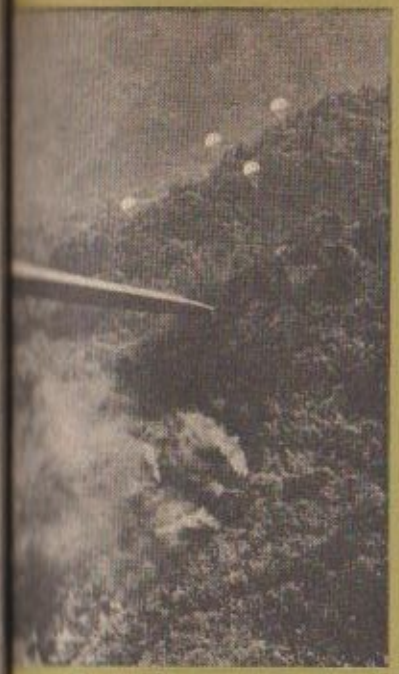
Monocled Major Bernard Fergusson of the Black Watch threw up a comfortable staff job for his chance to singe the Mikado's beard. "All my life I've wanted to blow up bridges," he exclaimed as he watched fragments of the Bonchaung Gorge bridge hurtle skyward. For jungle reading, Fergusson took along one of Trollope's novels. "We smoked all 600 pages," he confessed. "You see, we had plenty of tobacco but ran out of cigarette paper."

Lieutenant Geoffrey Lockett, a former Liverpool wine merchant, was known as the "toothless, kilted wonder." He had lost all his teeth, grew a waist-length beard to frighten the Japanese and insisted on fighting the whole campaign in a kilt.

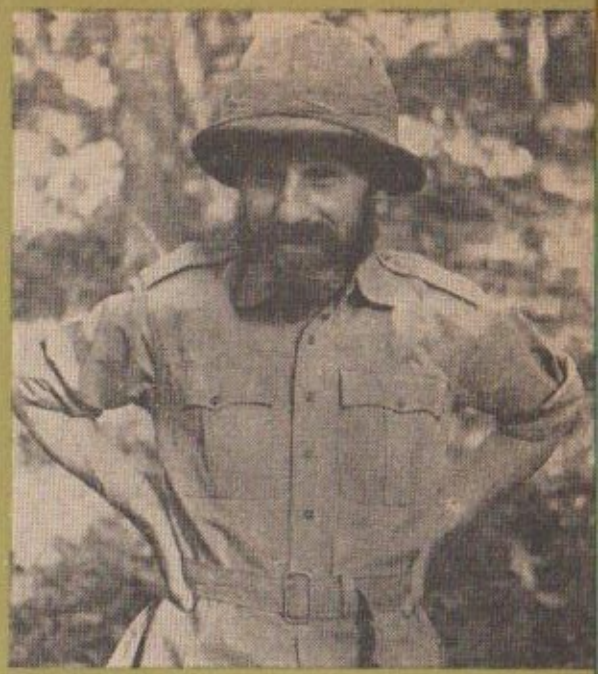
"Wingate's Follies" included a Burmese prince; a former Oxford historian, Lieutenant William Edge, a good hand at preparing a dish of raw buffalo steak; and a commando sergeant, Robert Blain of Loch Lomond who, when the situation looked black, would quip: "As my old grandmother says, these things are sent to try us."

Back in India, Wingate was greeted as "Lawrence of Burma." His fabulous guerrilla exploits had already won him the titles: "Lawrence of Judea" and "Lawrence of Ethiopia." In Britain people simply called him "The New Lawrence." He was actually a blood relative of Lawrence of Arabia.

With his death, in an air crash in March 1944, the army lost an eccentric soldier-genius. Wingate was a "sword and Bible" general, a profound believer in prayer, a mystic given to Yoga, and a hard-bitten professional soldier who loved fighting for its own sake. He started the day with prayer, and used Scripture passages for code. The sword, the Bible and the sympathy for strange races were all a part of Wingate's heritage. His father served thirty-two years in the Indian army, and after retiring founded a mission for the Pathans. His deeply religious mother gave him a Puritan upbringing.



Smoke fires guide the aircraft dropping supplies to the Chindits



Brigadier Orde Wingate, the "sword and bible" soldier who beat the Japanese at jungle warfare

Rations for a Chindit: biscuits, dates, cheese, salt, tea, matches, chocolate, dried milk, cigarettes

Wingate's Circus moves on. Pack-mules carry the heavier equipment as the Chindits cross a river far behind the enemy lines

Wingate had the lean face of an intellectual; deep-set, piercing blue eyes, a thin bony nose, severe mouth and lantern jaw. In Burma he wore a tattered bush shirt, russet corduroy trousers and an old-fashioned scuttle-shaped sun helmet.

He had a pet theory that human beings could store up energy as a camel stores up water. In the field he could keep going for weeks on end with only a few hours of sleep. But when the job was done he would spend days sleeping or in dreamy contemplation. He was a fanatic about physical fitness, a non-smoker and believed firmly in the health-giving properties of raw onions, which he munched on the march. He massaged his back with a rubber hairbrush every night.

For a man whose profession was war, Wingate's range of interests was bewildering. In the early morning he could be heard singing to himself in Arabic. He was passionately fond of music, and would lie for hours on the floor listening to symphonic records. His literary tastes extended from Shakespeare to the *Daily Mirror* comic-strip heroine "Jane."

He first met his beautiful wife on board a Mediterranean liner; she was fifteen, he was thirty. "She marched up to me," he recalled, "and said: 'You're the man I'm going to marry.' It was a kind of joint commando arrangement. We both felt the same way."

Wingate talked like an encyclopaedia. In the officers' mess he would hold forth on Yoga, the social habits of the hyena, the behaviour of flies when you put them under a tumbler, 18th-century painting and how to win the war. In Ethiopia he once amazed a group of junior officers with a discourse on the technique of hyena hunting in the moonlight.

Wingate was no respecter of rank or title; his indiscretion was prodigious. He lectured superiors on their mistakes of policy, and was probably the only British officer in modern times who used the ancient prerogative of complaining in writing to the King about one of his superiors. But after provoking the wrath of a group of brass hats with his unorthodox ideas, Wingate once soberly remarked to a friend: "You know, I'm not half as crazy as people think."

In Palestine in 1938 he was awarded the DSO—to which he added two bars—for leading the night patrols that cleared the country of Axis-subsidized Arab terrorists. In Ethiopia he won the admiration and support of the tribesmen by a series of swashbuckling commando forays against vastly superior Italian forces.

Wingate was one of the few white men in the war who succeeded in swaying the primitive native mind. He always carried with him a duplicating machine, a loudspeaker and a unit of specially trained native propagandists. At every village in Burma and Ethiopia he paused long enough to hand out leaflets and to broadcast a manifesto framed in simple, picturesque language. "The mysterious men who have come among you," he told the Burmese, "can summon from afar great and mysterious powers of the air, and will rid you of the fierce, scowling Japanese." The Burmese reverently named him "Lord Protector of the Pagodas." They kept mum about the movements of the Chindits and guided them over secret jungle trails. Without this co-operation the expedition would probably have been tracked down and annihilated.

The Ethiopian campaign was a typical Wingate show all the way —full of dash, surprise and successful bluff. With only 1,800 Sudanese and Ethiopian *Askaris*, he stormed Italian strongholds in a series of rapier-like thrusts. Groups of fuzzy-haired Ethiopian irregulars—Wingate insisted they be called "Patriots"—rallied to his side. Altogether this half-pint army accounted for 40,000 Italians, killed or captured. In May 1941 he entered Addis Ababa on a white charger by the side of Haile Selassie.

Field-Marshal Wavell was so impressed that he summoned Wingate to India in the autumn of 1942, raised him to the rank of brigadier, and gave him a free hand to build up a super-commando force that would be the vanguard of reconquest of Burma.

Wingate turned this commission into the deed that earned him a place in the history of the war—as the man who proved that the Japanese could be beaten on their own chosen ground.

Condensed from The Atlantic Monthly

Huelva, Spain : 1943

The Corpse That Hoaxed the Axis

By the Hon. Ewen E. S. Montagu

Former British Naval Intelligence Officer and now Judge Advocate of the Fleet

IN THE GRAVEYARD of the Spanish town of Huelva, on the Atlantic Coast 130 miles north-west of Gibraltar, there lies a British subject. He died from pneumonia in the foggy damp of Britain in the autumn of 1942, never knowing that he would lie for ever under the sunny skies of Spain. In his life he had done nothing special for his country. After death he rendered a service that probably saved thousands of Allied lives.

The tale begins in the autumn of 1942, when the invasion of North Africa was moving forward steadily to victory. The decision had been tentatively made to strike next in Sicily. The Germans were bound to anticipate that Sicily would be one of the next objectives. How could we convince them otherwise and fox them into scattering their strength?

One member of our security team had a suggestion. The Germans knew our officers were continually being flown round the coast of Spain to North Africa. Why not plant a body, carrying doctored papers, in the sea off Spain as if coming from a crashed plane? If it floated ashore it was a good bet that the papers would fall into the hands of German espionage agents.

A practical question arose. A dead man does not breathe; if his body is placed in the sea the lungs remain empty—so it might be possible for a post-mortem to establish that the body was dead

when it entered the water. The finder would then suspect a "plant."

We quietly opened inquiries in service medical circles to obtain a body whose cause of death could be confused with drowning. Finally a report came through: a man had just died from pneumonia, in which form of death there is liquid in the lungs.

Some of the dead man's relatives were alive. Without disclosing details we obtained their consent—on the understanding that the identity of the body would always remain secret. All I need say here is that the dead man, who was in his early thirties, from that time forward became "Major William Martin, Royal Marines." His body was placed in cold storage while we devised our plan.

From the outset it was decided that the document carrying the deception must be on a really high level. No mere indiscretion from one brigadier to another would do. I arranged for Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Nye, Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff, to write a letter to General Alexander, then commanding the 18th Army Group in Africa. The letter was an off-the-record explanation of why Alexander was not getting quite what he wanted from the chiefs of staff. By inference it carried the conclusion that the target we were planning to attack in the western Mediterranean was *not* Sicily.

In the letter we took care to plant two false targets as being our possible objectives—one in Greece, and the other, not actually identified in this letter, somewhere in the western Mediterranean. The letter also made it clear that we *wanted* the Germans to think that the landing would be in Sicily—that we were using it as the "cover" for our real target. Thus, if the Germans swallowed the trick, any real leakage about Sicily that reached them would be regarded as part of our deception.

In addition, we decided to give Major Martin a communiqué from Lord Louis Mountbatten to Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean. It explained Major Martin's mission and added:

"I think you will find Martin the man you want. . . . Let me

COMBINED OPERATIONS HEADQUARTERS,
14, RICHMOND TERRACE,
WHITEHALL, S.W.1.

21st April,
1943.

Dear Admiral of the Fleet,

I promised V.C.I.C.S. that Major Martin would arrange with you for the onward transmission of a letter he has with him for General Alexander. It is very urgent and very "hot" and as there are some remarks in it that could not be seen by others in the War Office, it could not go by signal. I feel sure that you will see that it goes on safely and without delay.

I think you will find Martin the man you want. He is quiet and shy at first, but he really knows his stuff. He was more accurate than some of us about the probable run of events at Dieppe and he has been well in on the experiments with the latest barges and equipment which took place up in Scotland.

Let me have him back, please, as soon as the assault is over. He might bring some sardines with him - they are "on points" here!

Yours sincerely,

Louis Mountbatten

Admiral of the Fleet Sir A.B. Cunningham, G.C.B.,D.S.O.,
Commander in Chief Mediterranean,
Allied Force H.Q.,
Algiers.

The corpse carried this letter from Lord Mountbatten; it was intended to make the Germans expect an invasion of Sardinia

have him back, please, as soon as the assault is over. He might bring some sardines with him—they are on points here!"

I thought the rather laboured joke about sardines would appeal to the Germans as well as helping to pinpoint Sardinia as the target of the assault.

The next hurdle to be got over was Major Martin's identity card, with photograph. It was shattering to find how hopelessly dead any photograph of the body looked. Then one day I looked across the table at a meeting and there, opposite me, was Major Martin's double. We persuaded the double to sit for the picture.

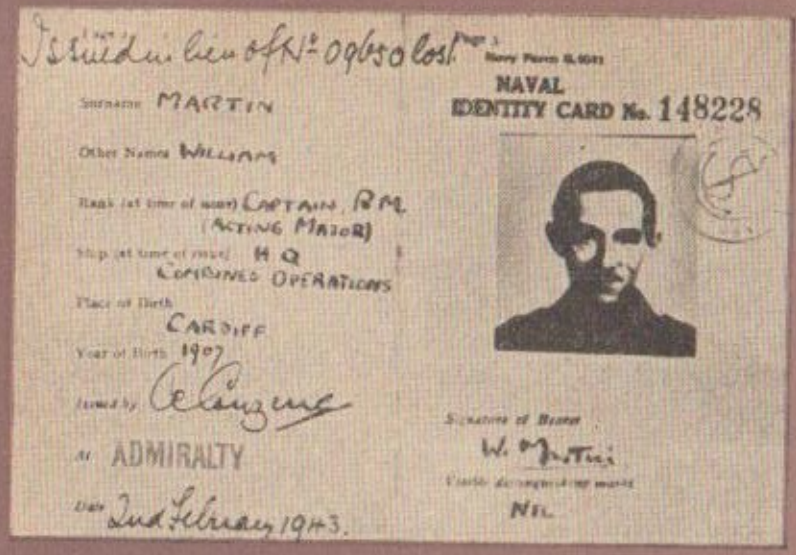
Now we had to give our body a personality. We decided Martin was a rather brilliant young man, and an expert on landing-craft, hence the reason for his being flown to North Africa. He was, however, a little extravagant, and in his pocket was a letter from Lloyds Bank head office, dated 14th April 1943, calling on him to pay off an overdraft of nearly £80.

Every young officer has some romantic attachment and Major Martin had recently met a charming girl called Pam. He carried a photograph of her and two letters from her in his wallet. These letters were folded and unfolded continually to look as though they had been read and re-read. Probably his engagement was the cause of his overdraft, for he also had a bill for £53 in his pocket for an engagement ring.

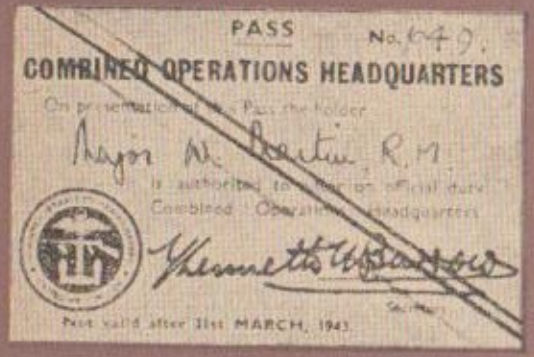
Major Martin had, of course, the usual effects and junk—identity disk, wrist watch, cigarettes, old bus tickets, scraps of paper, keys. We decided that he would probably take his fiancée to the theatre on his last night in England. So the halves of two tickets to *Strike a New Note* for 22nd April were put into his pocket before he left by submarine on 19th April.

Now the preparation of the hoax was complete.

We decided to plant the body off Huelva, a small port in south-west Spain near the Portuguese frontier. It would, of course, be normal for the Spaniards to hand over the body to the British Vice-Consul for burial. But we felt confident that the local German



Major Martin's identity card. The corpse looked too "hopelessly dead" to be photographed, so another officer posed for the picture



Martin's Combined Operations pass

Also planted on the body were two tickets for "Strike a New Note"

As part of the elaborate plot, Major Martin's death was reported in *The Times*

1943

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

ROYAL NAVY

The Board of Admiralty regrets to announce the following casualties which have been sustained in meeting the general hazards of war. Next-of-kin have been notified:—

OFFICERS

KILLED

A/Capt. Sir T. L. Beevor, Bt., R.N.; T/Lt. D. A. Burgass, R.N.V.R.; Lt. J. L. Fraser, R.N.V.R.; Lt. P. F. S. Gould, D.S.C., R.N.; T/Sub-Lt. (A) J. H. Hodgson, R.N.V.R.; T/Spb-Lt. (A) K. R. Joll, R.N.V.R.; Rear-Admiral P. J. Mack, D.S.O.; T/Lt (A) G. Mutrie, R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. (A) G. Raynor, R.N.V.R.; T/Sub-Lt. J. N. Wishart, R.N.V.R.

ROYAL MARINES.—T/Capt (A/Major) W. Martin.

DIED FROM WOUNDS OR INJURIES

T/Sub-Lt. (A) J. Hall, R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. A. G. D. Heybyrne, R.N.V.R.

MISSING, PRESUMED KILLED

T/Lt. (A) H. V. Donald, R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. R. A. [illegible], R.N.V.R.; T/Lt. D. H. [illegible]

On the submarine journey, the body travelled in this container packed with dry ice

agent would get copies of the papers, and it turned out that our confidence in him was not misplaced.

By good fortune, the submarine *Seraph*, commanded by Lieutenant Jewell, was due to sail for Malta at about the right date. Jewell had smuggled General Mark Clark in and out of North Africa in 1942 before the Allied landings and had also taken General Giraud by submarine when he had escaped from France.

I checked on the weather to be expected off Huelva. Again we were lucky. The prevailing wind would be "on-shore."

Final approval was now sought from the Prime Minister. We had to warn him that if the Germans saw through our deception Sicily would be pinpointed as the Allied target. Churchill gave his consent, and directed that General Eisenhower, in supreme command of the invasion of Sicily, be informed.

The *Seraph* sailed at 6 p.m. on 19th April 1943. On board was Major William Martin—safely stored in a six-foot metal canister packed with dry ice.

For ten days the *Seraph* surfaced only at night. On 30th April she was 1,600 yards off Huelva, undetected and on schedule. At zero hour, 4.30 a.m., the canister was hauled aloft and Major Martin was slid out. Jewell inflated the Major's Mae West and four young officers bent bare-heads as their commander murmured the burial service. And then with a gentle push Major Martin went to war.

Half a mile away Jewell launched a rubber dinghy which had been taken from one of our aircraft. Only one aluminium oar was put in it so as to simulate haste.

Early on the morning of 30th April 1943, a Spanish fisherman sighted the body close in-shore. It was recovered by the authorities and a post-mortem was carried out. The verdict was "asphyxiation through immersion in the sea." The British Vice-Consul was duly informed and on 2nd May 1943, Major Martin was buried with full military honours.

So far so good. We had been given the body—*but we had not been told about the documents!*

On 4th May we sent an "Immediate Most Secret" signal stating that we had learned that Major William Martin had been carrying papers, some of which were "of great importance and secrecy." Formal demand was to be made to the neutral Spanish Government for all these documents.

Meanwhile, the German agent in Huelva had not let us down. He had learned of the existence of the envelopes and of the distinction of the addresses on them, and there is no doubt from what happened later that he alerted his superiors. Not until 30th May did the Chief of the Spanish Naval Staff hand over the documents to our attaché and inform him that "everything was safely there."

We then asked that a tombstone be placed over the grave. It is still there. (Pam sent a wreath.) Finally, we had Major Martin's name inserted in the casualty list which appeared in *The Times* of 4th June 1943.

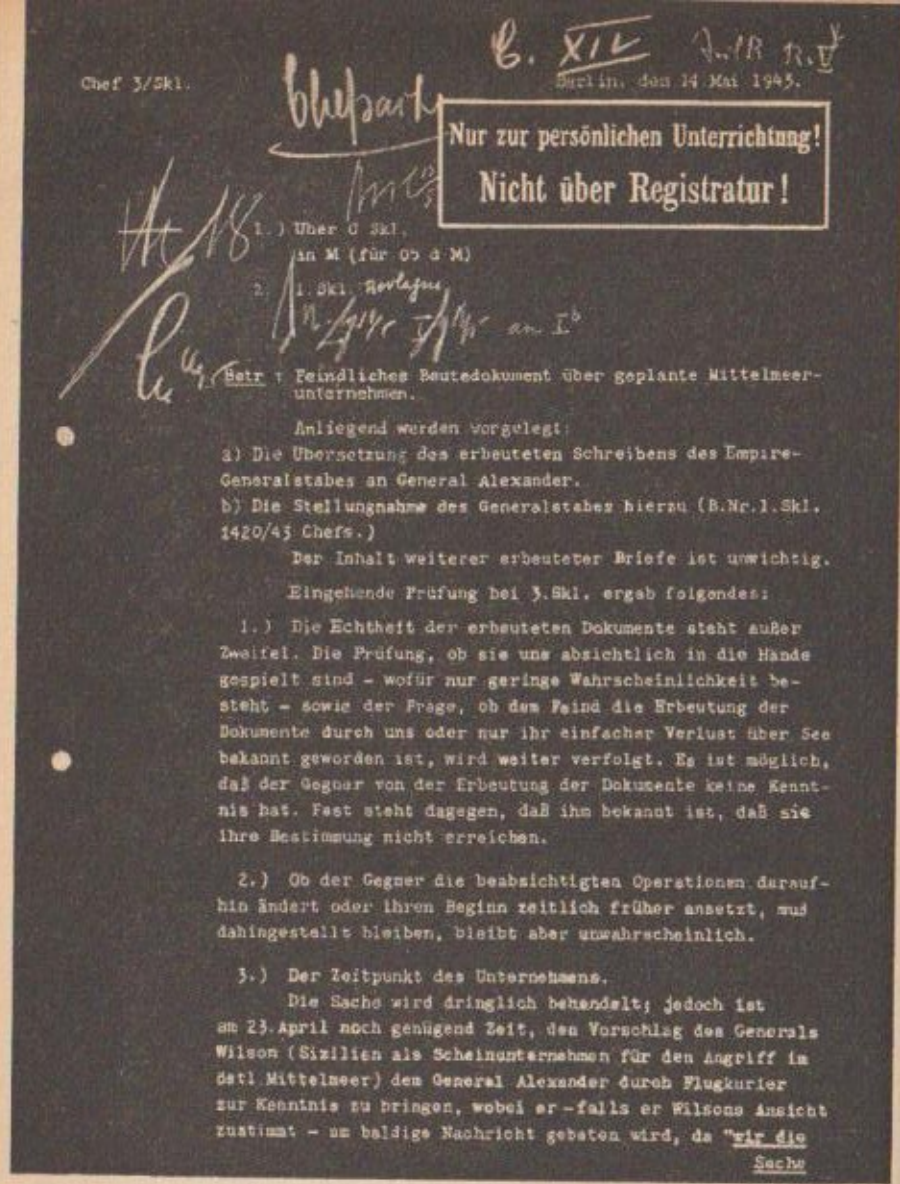
The success of the landing on Sicily in July was pretty good evidence that our ruse had succeeded, but proof positive was found later in captured enemy documents.

One day after the war the British officer in charge of the examination of captured German naval archives reported to the Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence with horror in his voice. A very senior army officer, he said, had sent some highly secret letters, by an irregular route, and they had fallen into German hands.

Sure enough, they were the documents carried by Major Martin. There, in the German files, were photographic copies of the letters with translations and intelligence reports. There was a file especially prepared for Admiral Karl Dönitz.

Fourteen days after the body had floated ashore in Spain the German Naval Staff War Diary recorded that their Army Staff had definitely concluded that the documents were genuine, and that the main Allied assault would be not in Sicily but in Sardinia, with a subsidiary landing in Greece.

The High Command moved a whole Panzer division from France to the Peloponnesus in Greece, to cover communications to the



Chef 3/Skl.

Bluepart

B. XII

Berlin, den 14 Mai 1943.

Nur zur persönlichen Unterrichtung!

Nicht über Registratur!

1.) Über C Skl.
an M (für OB d M)

2. 1. Skl. Vorlage

Betr.: Feindliches Beutedokument über geplante Mittelmeer-unternehmen.

Anliegend werden vorgelegt:

a) Die Übersetzung des erbeuteten Schreibens des Empire-Generalstabes an General Alexander.

b) Die Stellungnahme des Generalstabes hierzu (B.Nr.1.Skl. 1420/43 Chefs.)

Der Inhalt weiterer erbeuteter Briefe ist unwichtig.

Eingehende Prüfung bei 3.Skl. ergab folgendes:

1.) Die Echtheit der erbeuteten Dokumente steht außer Zweifel. Die Prüfung, ob sie uns absichtlich in die Hände gespielt sind - wofür nur geringe Wahrscheinlichkeit besteht - sowie der Frage, ob dem Feind die Erbeutung der Dokumente durch uns oder nur ihr einfacher Verlust über See bekannt geworden ist, wird weiter verfolgt. Es ist möglich, daß der Gegner von der Erbeutung der Dokumente keine Kenntnis hat. Fest steht dagegen, daß ihm bekannt ist, daß sie ihre Bestimmung nicht erreichen.

2.) Ob der Gegner die beabsichtigten Operationen daraufhin ändert oder ihren Beginn zeitlich früher ansetzt, muß dahingestellt bleiben, bleibt aber unwahrscheinlich.

3.) Der Zeitpunkt des Unternehmens.

Die Sache wird dringlich behandelt; jedoch ist am 23.April noch genügend Zeit, den Vorschlag des Generals Wilson (Sizilien als Scheinunternehmen für den Angriff im östl.Mittelmeer) dem General Alexander durch Flugkurier zur Kenntnis zu bringen, wobei er - falls er Wilsons Ansicht zustimmt - um baldige Nachricht gebeten wird, da "wir die Sache

When Major Martin and his phoney papers were washed ashore in Spain, the German High Command decided that "the authenticity of the captured documents is beyond dispute." Soon afterwards several Nazi units were re-deployed, and the Allied landing on Sicily met weakened resistance

two beaches—Cape Araxos and Kalamata—mentioned in the documents Major Martin carried. This was an enormous operation that kept the division out of the war for some time. The High Command also ordered the laying of minefields off the Greek coast, the installation of coastal batteries and the preparation of R-boat (German motor torpedo boat) bases, command stations and sea-patrol services. A whole group of R-boats was sent from Sicily to Greece in June.

In the west, Field-Marshal Wilhelm Keitel himself signed an order from the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces ordering "reinforcement of Sardinia." A strong Panzer force was sent to Corsica, and defences were improved on the north coast of Sicily (where we did not land) against "a diversionary attack during the assault on Sardinia."

Even after the Sicily invasion had started, the High Command asked for a special look-out in the Straits of Gibraltar for convoys which would be going to attack Corsica and Sardinia. In other documents it was stated bitterly that the sending of R-boats to Greece had left a fatal gap in the defences of Sicily.

The success of Major Martin's "mission" can be measured in the words of Field-Marshal Rommel, whose personal papers reveal that when the Allies invaded Sicily the German defences were led astray—"as a result of a diplomatic courier's body being washed up off Spain."

Hitler must also have seen the documents, for Admiral Dönitz recorded in his diary these words: "The Fuehrer does not agree . . . that the most likely invasion point is Sicily. He believes that the discovered Anglo-Saxon order confirms that the attack will be directed mainly against Sardinia and the Peloponnesus."

Condensed from "The Man Who Never Was," published by Evans Brothers, London

German-occupied France: 1944

Confusion was Their Business

By Frederic Sondern

WEEKS before D-Day in Normandy the crew of an Allied bomber dragged themselves out of the wreckage of their crash-landed plane and held a despondent council in a ditch near by. They knew they were somewhere in central France, in the heart of German-held territory. Suddenly the pilot pointed. "Am I seeing things," he yelled, "or is that really an Englishman?"

A jeep bristling with machine-guns and driven by an officer in British battledress was bearing down on them.

"Hello, chaps," said the apparition as the jeep came to a halt. "If you've any wounded, we'd best get them to hospital. It isn't far."

The flyers goggled with open mouths. "Oh, everything's all right," the Englishman assured them. "We're the Special Air Service—behind the German lines, you know. Glad to have you."

That was their introduction to Britain's phantom army and its most irregular regulars. From El Alamein through North Africa, Sicily, Italy and France to the German border, these men wrote one of military history's most fantastic chapters. In Africa, their parachutists and jeep-borne commandos struck Nazi airfields 500 miles behind Rommel's front line, destroying more German planes on the ground than the RAF did in the air. They kept Axis supply lines in an almost continuous state of disorganization. In the battle of France they did the same thing again, on a much larger scale.

The designers of the invasion knew that its success depended in

great measure on preventing the Germans from getting heavy reinforcements to the beachheads before our armies were securely planted there. Bombers were to do a major part of the job by bombing key transport points. But even under the best circumstances they could not be expected to hit as many targets as the Allied tacticians wanted knocked out simultaneously. The various French underground units were very efficient, but they lacked the unification necessary to guarantee execution of the intricate schedule of destruction and panic which must synchronize precisely with the Allied landing and advance. The hardened, experienced supercommandos of the Special Air Service—each man expert in hand-to-hand fighting, scouting and demolition work—were the only possible group for the job. They were brought up from Italy to tackle their toughest assignment.

The first SAS parachutists began landing on French soil at night in groups of two or three long before D-Day. With the help of Frenchmen, these "reception committees" reconnoitred their areas to find fields where men and supplies could land, and woods and houses where they could be hidden. When ready they reported to SAS headquarters over small radio transmitters, and the main forces of the secret invasion began arriving.

In a few cases the SAS landing parties chanced on German patrols and had to fight for their lives. In general, however, they got down safely with their equipment, also dropped by parachute, which included jeeps, folding motor-cycles, machine-guns and other types of light ordnance.

Each party moved frequently, to avoid betrayal by the sympathetic but incautious population. The men rarely used tents but slept in bags on the ground round well-dispersed jeeps, encircled by outposts on guard. Every one of them had a tommy gun within reach day and night.

According to plan, D-Day found the main SAS forces astride the German communication lines from the Cherbourg peninsula to the east and south. Each party—ranging in size from five or six

men to twenty or thirty—had been exhaustively briefed on the railway, power and telephone key-points and on the other installations it was to destroy.

One operations report, typical of hundreds which flowed into SAS headquarters and were transmitted to Allied headquarters, described what German resistance they might expect. "Made reconnaissance on —— line between kilometres 90 and 92. At 2200 hours neutralized guards at kilometres 90 and placed bombs on both tracks. At 2212 hours westbound troop train derailed by explosion. Cut telephone and signal wires. At 2225 hours eastbound train derailed by explosion. Withdrew."

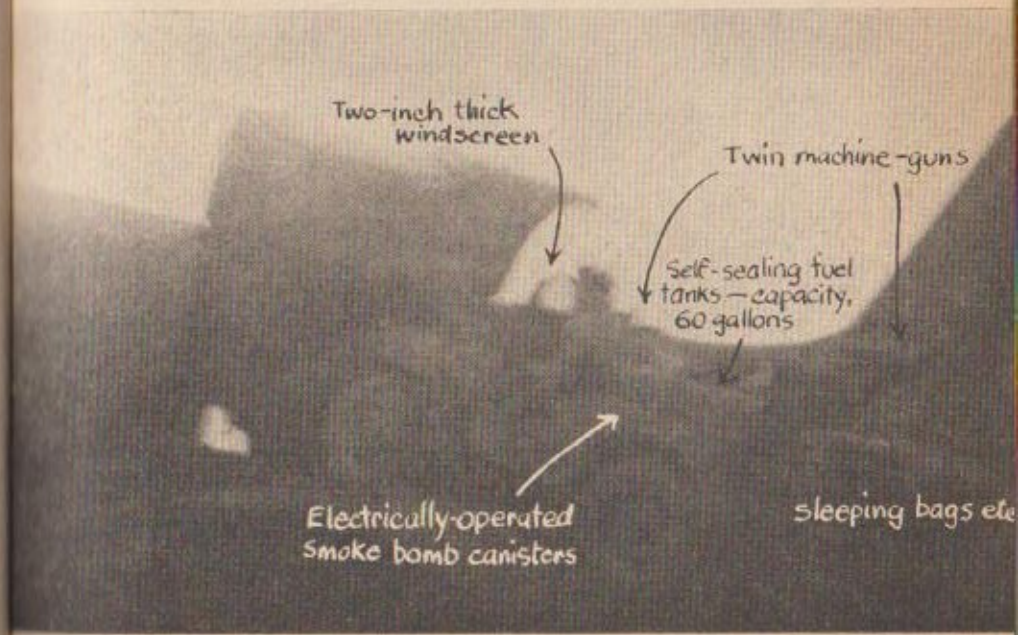
Besides demolitions, SAS did other jobs. One was guiding in the bombers of the Tactical Air Force. After one TAF raid on a railway bottleneck, an underground scout working for SAS went to assess the damage. "How long will it take you to repair that?" he asked a workman. The burly Frenchman looked long and carefully at the questioner. "Not very long," he replied finally. "But half a mile farther up, where the signal box and switches are, the bombs could have made a real mess." Shortly thereafter a stick of bombs landed in the right place.

The German Paris command, in a desperate attempt to stamp out the invisible army, unleashed the Gestapo and the so-called French Militia—auxiliary police recruited from the criminal dregs of the population—on a furious reign of terror. Throughout Normandy people remotely suspected of helping were rounded up by the hundred, tortured for information and shot. But despite all measures, the SAS and their helpers continued striking.

One of the exploits of Sergeant Chalky is considered only mildly unusual among the regiment's veterans. In the Morvan district of central France a unit of German soldiers had just been drawn up at attention in the village square when round a blind corner tore a jeep containing two British soldiers. It slithered to a halt and before the Germans knew what happened, one of the men was running straight at them with a Bren gun blazing. The Germans

Paddy Mayne

David Stirling



Dusk take-off for an SAS jeep that is to operate behind enemy lines. Its crew of three consists of driver, front-gunner and rear-gunner

broke for cover, but not before Sergeant Chalky had littered the street with grey-clad bodies. Then he and the jeep disappeared round the corner. He had been instructed to join a larger party in an attack on these Germans, but when the others failed to show up, he had decided to do it himself.

On another occasion a group of fifty encamped in a wood was informed by a Maquis agent that the Gestapo had learned of their hiding place. That night 200 German SS troops were to close in from one side and 300 French Militia from the other. "The Englishmen should withdraw at once," the Maquis said. "Not at all!" replied the commanding officer.

The SS and Militia men attacked at dusk and walked into a withering hail of bullets. The undergrowth and ditches were alive with machine-gunners. For hours the stalking and shooting went on, until a German officer discovered that the battle was being waged exclusively by the SS and Militia. The SAS had long since withdrawn and were busily raising hell among near-by supply dumps that had been stripped of their guards. German prisoners and captured documents later revealed the extent of the confusion caused by this campaign of disruption.

SAS operations began in 1941, when the British position in Africa was so desperate that the Middle East Command was willing to listen to the crazy scheme of two young Guards lieutenants. David Stirling and Jock Lewis were obsessed with the idea that small groups of picked men, carefully trained, could live and wreak havoc far behind the enemy's lines. They talked their way through all opposition to the commanding general. "Stirling's rest camp" was set up in a remote Egyptian wasteland. Volunteers were gathered from the best Middle East units, and they were taught everything from parachuting to fieldcraft and Arabic.

Stirling's results were quick and sensational. A German airfield, 500 miles behind Rommel's front line, was bowled over one night by a squadron of wild men in jeeps who blew up its planes and levelled its installations in half an hour flat, and vanished into the

desert whence they came. Remote secret German supply dumps in the desert were located and destroyed. Axis operations along the coastal road were constantly interrupted and convoys waylaid and annihilated. The Luftwaffe lost 300 planes in a few months by SAS forays, and was weakened just when Rommel needed it most for the push into Egypt.

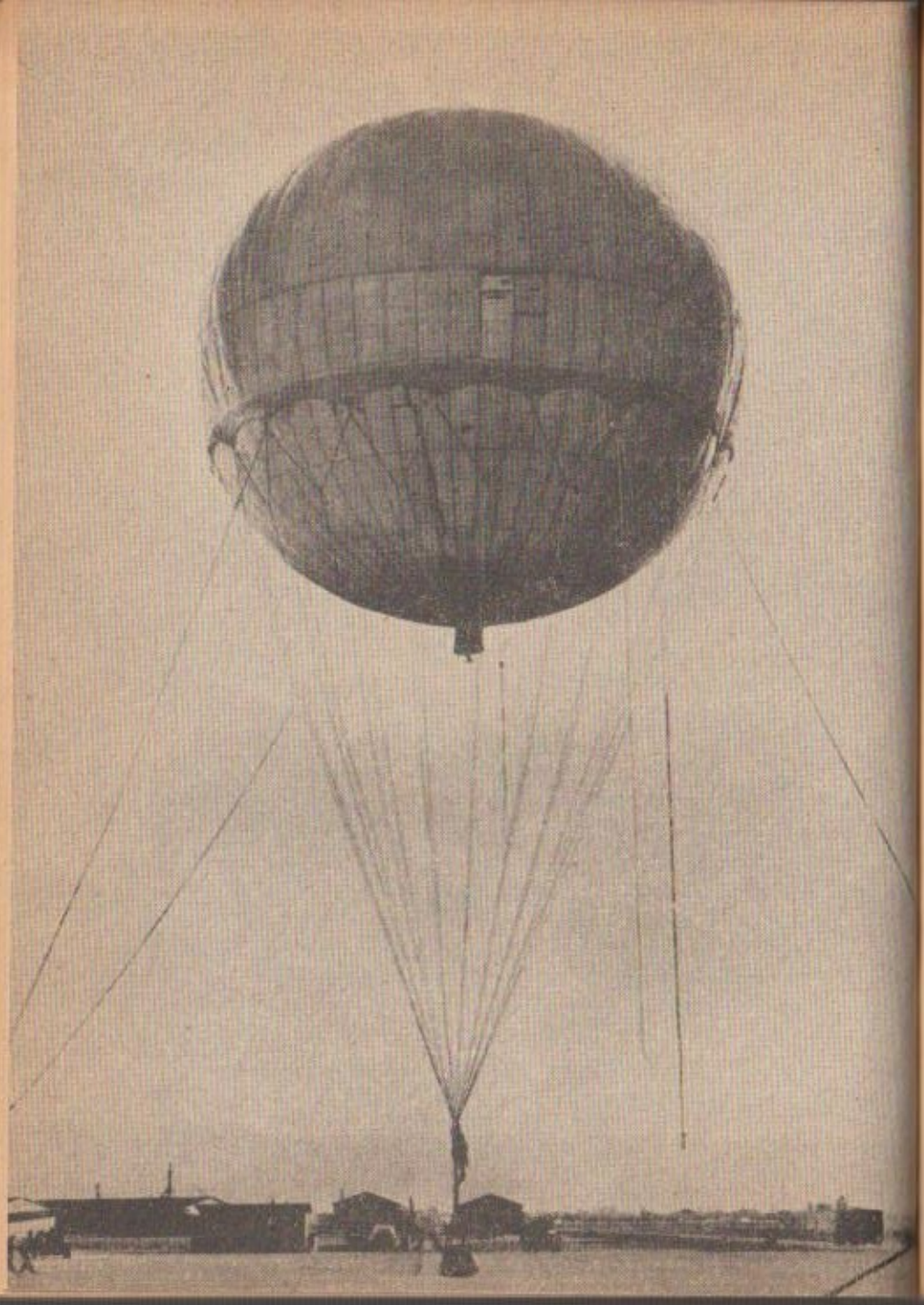
Stirling was finally betrayed by an Arab guide in Tunisia and captured by the Germans. Since Jock Lewis had been killed in one of the early operations, the SAS command went to another natural leader—Paddy Mayne.

This big, craggy-faced Irishman—a former rugger player and boxing star—with a gentle brogue and shy smile was much more than a commanding officer. He became a legend. A favourite story of the SAS involves the dashboard of a Messerschmitt 109 which came from the fortieth plane the Colonel himself destroyed in a single night's raid on a German airfield. He had planted his last bomb on the thirty-ninth. When he got to the fortieth—by that time the Germans were really shooting—he climbed into the Messerschmitt, and with the titanic strength he displayed in such berserk moods, tore the dashboard out with his bare hands and waved it triumphantly over his head as he retired in a jeep.

During the Normandy campaign, Colonel Mayne operated behind the German lines round Le Mans, a key communications point. When Cherbourg fell, SAS men moved northward and eastward to help prepare the way for the drives of Montgomery and Patton. On the Paris-Amiens line alone—the vitally important main line from Paris to the coast—they wrecked almost fifty trains, blew a dozen bridges and totally disrupted communications.

Montgomery, who had thanked them officially in North Africa, thanked them again after the Battle of France even more enthusiastically. And deservedly too, for Paddy Mayne's incredibles fought a dangerous and secret warfare that paved the way for the final destruction of the Axis.

Condensed from Tricolor



Japan's Last Secret Weapon—Balloons

By Brigadier-General W. H. Wilbur

Formerly Chief of Staff, US Western Defence Command

THE FIRST bombing of Tokyo, on 18th April 1942, hit the Japanese right in the middle of their pride. Casting about for a means of reprisal, they conceived the first transoceanic automatic-balloon campaign in history. It took them two years to get ready, but in the six months following 1st November 1944 they turned loose 9,000 ingeniously contrived gas-bags, engineered to drop incendiary and fragmentation bombs on American forests, farms and cities.

These new weapons, thirty-three feet in diameter, were designed to travel across the Pacific at an altitude of 30,000 to 35,000 feet, where prevailing air currents move towards America at the rate of 100 to 200 miles an hour. Although no human hand exercised any control over the balloons—even by radio—after their release, it is conservatively estimated that between 900 and 1,000 of them reached the American continent. They appeared everywhere, from Alaska to Mexico. Nearly 200 more or less complete units were found in the north-western United States and western Canada. Fragments of seventy-five more were picked up on land elsewhere or fished out of the coastal waters of the Pacific, and flashes in the sky indicated to observers that at least 100 exploded in mid-air.

Efforts have been made to belittle this attack. The fact remains that it marked a significant development in the art of war. For the first time missiles were sent overseas without human guidance, and

the threat of great damage was very real. Fortunately winter snows eliminated the forest-fire hazard. If the balloon assault had continued into the dry summer, when America's vast western forests were like tinder; if the Japanese had maintained their March 1945 rate of launching an average of 100 balloons a day; and if they had equipped them with hundreds of small incendiaries instead of a few large ones—or with bacteriological agents—they would have wrought havoc.

The Japanese made their first mass balloon tests in the spring of 1944, setting loose 200 trial gas-bags. None of these reached American shores. The first successful ocean-spanning balloons were released on 1st November 1944, and on 4th November the first report of them was received. That day a navy patrol craft spotted what looked like a large fragment of tattered cloth floating on the sea. A sailor tried to drag the fabric aboard and discovered a heavy mass attached to it. Unable to lift it, he slashed it off with a knife, thus permitting the undercarriage of gadgets and explosives to sink. All that was salvaged was the envelope; it bore Japanese marks, however, and revealed the fact that something mysterious had been introduced into the struggle of war.

From the first, the possibilities of this new campaign became obvious, and the assistance of all US government agencies was immediately enlisted. The navy was alerted and the FBI was called in. Forest rangers were told to report any balloon landings and any portions of balloons or undercarriages that were recovered.

After the finding of the first balloon-envelope there was a lapse of two weeks before a second fragment was salvaged from the ocean. A little later another balloon, burnt and partly destroyed, tumbled down well inland, in Montana. By mid-December, sorting through numerous scraps of information, technicians had worked out the basic principles of the weapon and artists had made rough drawings of it.

Fragments were sent to the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, DC, and to the California Institute of Technology.

They found that the envelope was constructed of several layers of heavy parchment stuck together with vegetable glue—and that it was far more effective in retaining hydrogen than the best rubberized balloon-cloth.

Experts who examined sand from the ballast bags reported the names of five places in Japan from which the sand must have come. The air force was asked to check activity at those places and soon delivered a report, with pictures, of one of the sites. The photos showed a manufacturing plant and outside it several pearl-grey spheres, apparently gas-bags being inflated for the flight to America.

Soon one of these pearl-grey bags was spotted in the air near a western US city. The pilot of an air force plane, sent up to bring it down undamaged, chaperoned it towards open country by repeated sweeps of air from his propeller. These air blasts caused the balloon-undercarriage to tilt so that the hydrogen-control device was released, thus venting the gas and causing the balloon to float gently to the ground. Fortunately the automatic destruction device failed to work. Everything was found intact.

The balloons, it was later learned, were constructed at a cost of about £160 each. Each carried about thirty six-pound sandbags, which were released successively by a tripping device actuated by a barometer whenever the balloon dropped below 30,000 feet. Another automatic control opened a valve to let hydrogen escape when the gas-bag rose above 35,000 feet. Each had three or four bombs, at least one of which was an incendiary. The others were thirty-two-pound fragmentation anti-personnel bombs. Both types were controlled by a release mechanism designed to operate after all the ballast bags had been dropped—the Japanese theory being that by that time the balloon would have arrived over the American continent. In addition, there was a device to explode the balloon after all the bombs had fallen. The fact that this device failed to work on at least ten per cent of the balloons that landed made it possible to salvage several practically undamaged.

With each batch of bomb-carrying balloons the Japanese sent

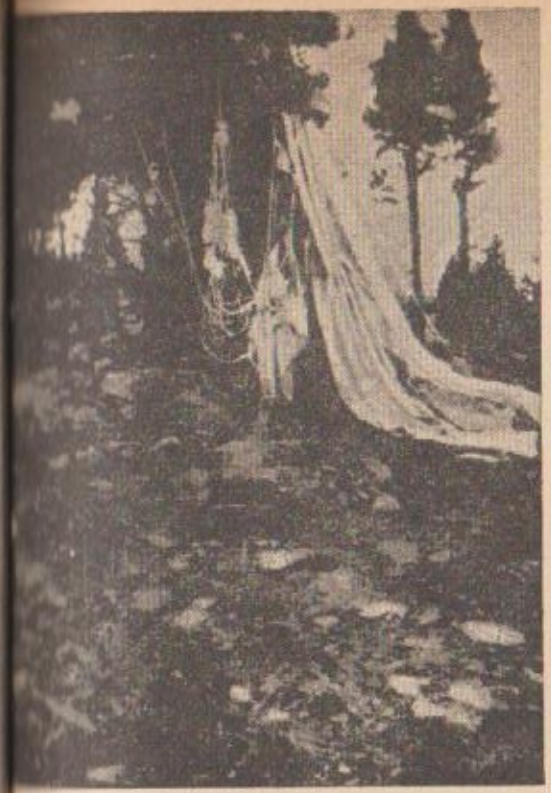
along one which gave off radio signals and served as a means of checking on the progress of the flock across the ocean. Because they wanted to be certain of their successful arrival on American soil, the Japanese used rubberized silk instead of paper for the bag of these pilot balloons—apparently believing that rubberized silk made a better container of hydrogen than paper. But exactly the opposite proved to be true. Only three of these silk balloons reached the United States.

After a few of the balloons had been recovered it seemed safe to assume that the danger from explosive bombs was minor, but that incendiaries would be a serious threat during the forest-fire season (July to September) on the US west coast. America needed the timber in those forests, so paratroop fire-fighting units were organized to co-operate with the ranger service and civilian forest-fire-fighting units. At best, however, the blanket of protection would have been very thin.

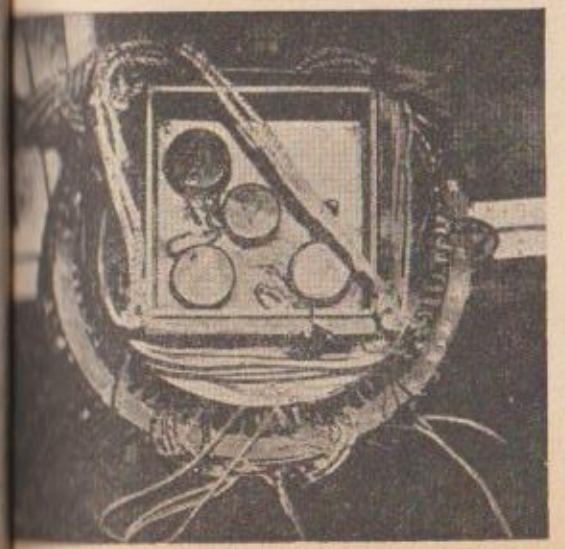
Meanwhile, to fight the possibility that the balloons would be used to shower down pestilence in the form of plant-disease spores, animal plagues or even human-disease germs, health officers, veterinary surgeons and agricultural experts were enlisted in the defence programme. Decontamination squads were trained; stocks of decontamination chemicals, suits and masks were set up at strategic points. Farmers and ranchers were urged to report the first signs of any strange disease in their cattle, sheep or pigs.

To keep the Japanese from learning what degree of success their campaign was attaining, press and radio in both the United States and Canada accepted a voluntary censorship which proved to be one of the marvels of the war. At the same time, this censorship made it difficult to warn the population. A group of children at a picnic in Oregon found a balloon, apparently tugged at it, and exploded the bombs. Five children and a woman were killed.

How could the military authorities advise millions of children of this hazard and also notify farmers and woodsmen in the west of the need for information without permitting a leak to the Japanese?



Left: This balloon drifted into western Canada before its anti-personnel and incendiary bombs exploded harmlessly



Above: One of the 9,000 bomb-carrying balloons launched by the Japanese floats to the ground

Left: A barometer-actuated mechanism released sandbags to keep the balloon in the air as it crossed the Pacific

Through superb co-operation from school authorities, teachers and chiefs of police both ends were accomplished.

Suddenly, at the end of April 1945, the balloon barrage ceased. Had the Japanese called off the attack, thinking it a failure? Or was it just a deceptive lull before a greater onslaught? Weeks and months passed with no resumption.

The mystery was solved three years later in 1948 when I visited Japan and conferred with General Kusaba, who had been in charge of the balloon offensive. He told me that altogether 9,000 balloons had been launched and that the Japanese estimated that at least ten per cent should reach the United States and Canada. Word of the initial landing in Montana did reach Japan. After that, however, the American press and radio blackout was complete. With only one reported landing on the American continent, the Japanese General Staff began clamping down on General Kusaba. Many times he was told that his campaign was a failure, that he was wasting the fast-dwindling resources of his country.

Finally, towards the end of April 1945, General Kusaba was told to cease all operations. The dictum of the staff was, "Your balloons are not reaching the American Continent. If they were, reports would be in the newspapers. Americans could not keep their mouths closed this long."

France: 1944

The Battle of D-Day Minus One

By Blake Clark

THE BBC's nine o'clock news on the evening of 5th June 1944 was interrupted by a dry voice saying, "*Eileen is married to Joe .... It is hot in Suez .... The compass points north .... The dice are on the table.*"

To most listeners, including the Germans, this was nonsense; but for 500,000 Frenchmen it was the long-awaited secret call to action. That night all over France bridges collapsed, dams burst, steel rails leaped from ties, trains raced down wrong tracks, trees crashed across roads, flames rose from fuel dumps, telephone lines plummeted to earth.

By the next day, D-Day, German troops and supplies were slowed to a walking pace. The formations sent to repel the landings in Normandy were delayed an average of forty-eight hours—precious time to the British and Americans. And later, after the breakthrough, French guerrillas constantly informed General Patton of the exact location of each German column, helping him to make one of the speediest drives in the history of warfare.

This powder keg of French resistance was first primed when a group of secret operatives, sent to France, got in touch with local saboteur groups which were spontaneously rising all over the country. These groups were persuaded to abandon sporadic acts of violence that only brought murderous reprisals, and to accept assignments from London headquarters.

The major underground objectives for D-Day were to silence communications, blast railways, and pave roads with mines to slow German Panzer divisions.

It was necessary to select, train and arm thousands of Frenchmen, under the very eyes of the Gestapo; agents arranged meetings of representatives of a million railway workers and the head of de Gaulle's secret service; de Gaulle men were slipped into key spots of the telecommunications system; villagers were instructed in explosives and mine-laying.

The average organizer working on these plans could expect to live three to four months—if he was lucky. He had to keep files of information, and these were sometimes found by the enemy. He was forced to trust a few persons, any one of whom could be a spy. He had to produce his identity papers occasionally, and if the numbers were checked he was lost.

If he was a British or American agent he had to be on constant guard against slips that might give him away. At mealtimes he had to remember to tuck his napkin in his collar, French fashion. He had to be careful not to ask for shaving cream or toothpaste, which had been absent from French shops for two years.

The Gestapo set traps to try to make agents give themselves away. In one city, riding two abreast on bicycles was arbitrarily prohibited. In another, no bar could serve red wine on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, and barmen were instructed to report anyone who asked for it. But despite such traps, some operatives led double lives with amazing success, opening tobacco shops, bookstalls and second-hand furniture shops where various "customers" traded without arousing suspicion.

Escapes were narrow. Operative 154, an American agent, wounded in a gun fight with the Gestapo, was handcuffed and tossed unconscious into the back of a staff car. Regaining consciousness, he took out a pistol concealed in his sock and shot each German in the back of the head. Frenchmen filed off his bonds and he continued his work in another section of France.

Operative 171, a de Gaulle worker, was in an hotel room when the Gestapo raided the place. He ran to the top floor but could find no escape to the roof. He darted into a room, and found a maid sorting sheets. Frantically he explained that he was running for his life and said, "Quick—get in bed with me." "No!" she protested. "Don't be a fool," he said. "There are other things on my mind."

The Gestapo men shoved open the door and turned on the light. The couple in bed pretended to be annoyed. The Gestapo leader laughed. "Enjoy yourselves," he said, and closed the door.

Sometimes the agents carried out special missions. For instance, Allied secret services wanted a sample of a new explosive powder being developed by German scientists. French operative 202 contacted a friend in the factory where the experiments were conducted. The Germans had made it impossible for workers to obtain samples, even brushing the nails of each one as he left. One day, when factory workers were observing a secretly planned minute of silence to demonstrate French unity, one man obstinately kept on working. Angry patriots knocked him down and beat him. Guards rushed to his aid and carried him to the hospital. A month later London scientists were working with a sample of the powder which he had seized a moment before the work-stoppage.

Indispensable to the success of the secret organization was the radio operator, who maintained regular communications with London, ordering arms and explosives, and directing the landings of new agents. The wireless operators were the unsung heroes of French resistance. The operators who transmitted from Paris were in constant danger of being pin-pointed by thirty-six German direction finders continually combing the ether. So efficient were these direction finders that twenty minutes after an agent came on the air the patrol car would be at his door. Many a radio operator escaped only seconds ahead of the Gestapo.

By January 1944, through the efforts of nearly 1,000 secret operatives, the full strength of every effective resistance group in France was working on the plans for D-Day. To each group,

headquarters in London dispatched detailed maps of the unit's particular area, indicating specific local objectives. Special instructors were parachuted in and held night classes for a few villagers at a time, showing them how to blow up railways and bridges. By 1st June, the map of France on the wall at headquarters was covered with red dots, each indicating where patriots were trained, supplied and ready for the signal to attack assigned objectives.

On the evening of 5th June, 5,000 Frenchmen, each carrying two packages of TNT, slipped out and blasted the railways of France in more than 500 places. And thanks to a strategically placed French operative, London knew every important train movement two days in advance, so that Allied planes were able to swoop down on almost all troop trains headed for Normandy.

Under orders from London, certain agents had become conversant with the operations of the seventy-four booster stations in France's long-distance telephone system. Now, equipped with German passes, they went to these stations and blew them up.

Thousands of villagers planted mines and littered roads, thus delaying German reinforcements for two days.

The underground's triumph on D-Day brought new thousands flocking to help clear the enemy from every part of France. To help them to organize quickly, headquarters sent a second wave of secret soldiers into enemy-occupied territory. Each man was a member of a team consisting of a British, a French and an American officer, and a radio operator.

Most of them went to the mountainous regions to help the Maquis, who now numbered 400,000—all wanting arms. In four months 5,000 tons of guns, grenades and medical supplies were flown over. In one daring daylight mission bombers dropped enough equipment to arm 36,000 men.

Always fighting in German-held territory, these teams had many hair-raising adventures. One British officer, who had broken his leg when he parachuted in, was recuperating in a French farm-house when the Germans came to search. An American radio operator

carried him to a swamp where he lay in water up to his neck for three days before the enemy gave up the hunt.

Eleven demolition groups parachuted into southern France, chiefly to cover Nazi escape routes along the Carcassonne Gap and the Rhône Valley. These 182 men organized and trained Maquis units, and in operations with them killed 461 Germans, wounded 467 and took some 10,000 prisoners. The first group landed in the *Département* of Lot, where Germans were strong. Organizing three battalions, they ambushed 1,000 Germans, blew up a railway bridge and a viaduct, and sealed the entire *Département* off.

As the Germans retreated, underground tactics changed. One group of twenty-five went in to save the great hydro-electric plant at Eguzon, the most important electric installation in France. The Germans had 500 men there ready to demolish the plant when it became necessary to pull out. The officer in command of the Allied operatives arranged a meeting with the enemy commander, spread his uniformed men through the ranks of the Maquis and permitted them to be glimpsed by the Germans while he negotiated. He threatened attack by 1,500 Allied paratroops, and offered safe-conduct to another city. The frightened Germans pulled out, leaving the power plant intact.

To a man, the soldiers of the secret army give full credit to the patriotic French people who risked everything to help liberate France. Many were continually hunted, and lived without adequate food or shelter. Operating in small bands or singly, some had carried on the fight for four years, dedicating their lives to the struggle against the Germans. Their valour will always be an inspiration to freedom-loving peoples.

Condensed from Tricolor

The Neutral War in Scandinavia

By Colonel Bernt Balchen, USAF

THE PART that Sweden played in the war has never been fully explained. Officially, of course, the Swedes were neutral; but thanks to their active, if secret, support of the Allied cause, we were able eventually to use Sweden as a base for our operations against the Germans in Norway.

During most of the time we had two concurrent operations over Norway and Sweden. One was flying out Norwegian air cadets and Allied flyers who had been interned. The other was supplying the Norwegian underground. The Swedes transported guns and explosives, saboteurs and trained Norwegian troops for us on their railways. Swedish troops on manoeuvres near the Norwegian border carried guns and other *matériel* that had been flown into the country, and left them for the Norwegians to use against the Germans. On one occasion, a Swedish police car delivered some detonators that were too dangerous to be moved by train.

It is amazing that the Germans never discovered the one sure way we had of getting men and materials into and out of Oslo—by means of tankers on the Stockholm-Oslo railway. More than one prominent figure made this trip—including Jens Christian Hauge, then the leader of the underground, and Norway's Defence Minister after the war.

Travelling in a tanker is not really so uncomfortable as it might seem. The only time a traveller had to be concealed in the

interior was while at a station or going over the border. More interesting were trips in the water tenders of the locomotives. In order not to freeze to death or drown, the agents made the journey in diving suits, with the front of the helmet unscrewed so that they could breathe. That was absolutely safe, and the Germans never suspected. At Oslo the train pulled in to a siding, and the traveller got out and went about his business.

When my special missions group first flew into Sweden, we did so with unmarked, unarmed planes and all uniforms carefully covered to conceal our nationality. But before a year had passed there were British, American and Norwegian uniforms on Swedish military flying fields: we were using two fields openly and had arranged for the use of five more.

Our operations got under way early in 1944. About 2,000 Norwegians had been training in Sweden, partly under the direction of Swedish officers. The Norwegian government wanted to get them to the Norwegian air base at Little Norway, near Toronto, Canada, for further training. General Spaatz of the American Strategic Air Force selected me for the job. I am a naturalized American citizen, but I was born in Norway and had served in the Norwegian Navy and Army. I had flown all over both Norway and Sweden, and before the war had been manager of the Norwegian Air Lines.

Our first job was to arrange with the Swedish Air Ministry—who knew our plans and were eager to co-operate—for marks for our planes, an identification code for future use, and radio frequencies for identification purposes. We arranged for the Swedish General Staff to be informed that we were expected at the border, so that anti-aircraft would not fire on us. Also the Swedes would tell us when German border patrol fighters were up, and any ship movement out of a Norwegian port was at once reported to Stockholm by Norwegian underground radio.

So there wasn't a convoy or flak ship along the coast that we didn't know about before we started our flights. We knew every gun emplacement on the Norwegian coast, where every German

division was stationed, how many planes there were on every field and what type.

I do not think that any underground in Europe was as carefully organized as that of Norway. We dropped men into Norway with definite tasks and they almost invariably did them well.

One of our most important stations was established in the Oslo maternity hospital. We dropped the operator and his radio set on the outskirts of Oslo, and our doctor friends there got him a job as electrician in the hospital. While he was fussing about on the roof with wires he managed to set up his aerials in such a manner that they could not be detected. He set up his apparatus in the attic, and was soon in direct communication with London.

The Germans, of course, intercepted some of the code messages and by means of radio locators determined that the radio must be in the hospital. So they surrounded it with SS men.

Our operator was pounding away at his key when two Gestapo men walked in. He tried to get up a stairway to the roof, but found that blocked. So he came back, shot the two Germans and ran down a stairway to a back entrance, where he found two more SS men. He shot them. Then he climbed a wall, ran across a street, through a building, and emerged in the farther street with his revolver in his pocket. Two weeks later he was on his way to Stockholm.

LATE IN 1944 it was decided to transport by air a company of police troops and two hospital units from northern Sweden to Kirkenes, in northern Norway, to participate in actions against Germans retreating from Finland. This was a full military operation. The planes came to Stockholm with US military markings, and with invasion stripes on their fuselages and tails. The crews were in full uniform. They landed at night. It was intended to get them out quickly, but the bad weather made it impossible for them to leave the field. So I went to Police Captain Olson to explain the difficulty.

"Why not give them internee certificates?" I said. "You can have them fingerprinted and photographed."

"Fine," said Olson. "I will be down at eight in the morning."

Then I called the Foreign Minister.

"They are all in uniform, and they all want to go into town. I don't know what to do," I said.

"Let them go," he said.

By April 1945 we were all in uniform in Stockholm. And if we had gone into Norway the Swedes would have gone with us. Many fleeing Norwegian patriots with the Germans at their heels were saved by soldiers of the Swedish border patrol, who took them to headquarters and gave them food and instructions for further progress. Once one of our agents was wounded in a running fight with the Gestapo. The Swedes had watched his progress for some time; he would drop to the ground and fire at the Germans, then get up and run a bit farther before falling and taking another shot to slow up the pursuit. He was within half a mile of the border when he was wounded and could run no more.

That was too much for the Swedes. Some of the patrol went across the border and took the fugitive away from the Germans at bayonet point. The Germans made a protest to the Swedish commanding officer, but little attention was paid to it.

Throughout the German occupation of Norway there were convoys running into Sweden over all the roads, and it was easy for the Norwegian underground to put two or three empty trucks into a convoy. Then, at a certain point, these trucks would drop out and others, packed with refugees and covered with tarpaulins, would take their places. All the Germans did was count the trucks. I think we lost only three trucks during the whole war.

THE Swedish air patrol which watched the northern border was more of a rescue patrol than anything else. For during the winter of 1944-5, when the Germans were being pushed back through northern Norway, taking with them Russian slave labourers as well as Norwegians and Lapps, there were many escapes over the border.

Sometimes the refugees could not quite make it, and would fall

exhausted, with frozen feet or legs, inside German-occupied territory. Hundreds were seen by the Swedish flying patrol, and the pilot would either land and pick them up or notify a ground patrol. Swedish ambulance planes in this work saved more lives than we will ever know.

During the war, at least 60,000 Norwegians escaped into Sweden, leaving all their possessions behind. They were registered at Stockholm by the Norwegian legation, and taken care of at Kjeseter in central Sweden. From their ranks a large Norwegian force was trained by Swedish and Norwegian officers for eventual action in Norway. By 1945 there were 15,500 well-trained Norwegian troops in these camps. Their equipment and supplies all came from the Swedish army.

Nearly 250,000 people from Norway, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania found sanctuary in Sweden, escaping slave-labour camps and sometimes mass executions. The Swedes also extended their activities outside their own country. In Oslo alone they fed 50,000 school children every day in the latter years of the German occupation, and in Finland 70,000 children were fed daily through the Swedish Red Cross.

ONE of the most astonishing by-products of Swedish neutrality was the handing over to Britain of the first undestroyed V-2 bomb. These bombs began falling on London in October 1944. One day in July 1944 I got a telephone call from London asking me to fly over some big boxes which were at Stockholm and weighed about two and a half tons. What was in them was very secret.

Lieutenant Colonel Keith Allen made the flight to Sweden in an old unarmed C-47, loaded the heavy boxes, and returned to Leuchars, our headquarters on the east Scottish coast. Then I flew the plane down to Farnborough, and turned the boxes over to Professor Alexander, who confirmed that they contained a V-2 without a war head. It had landed in Sweden while on a test flight.

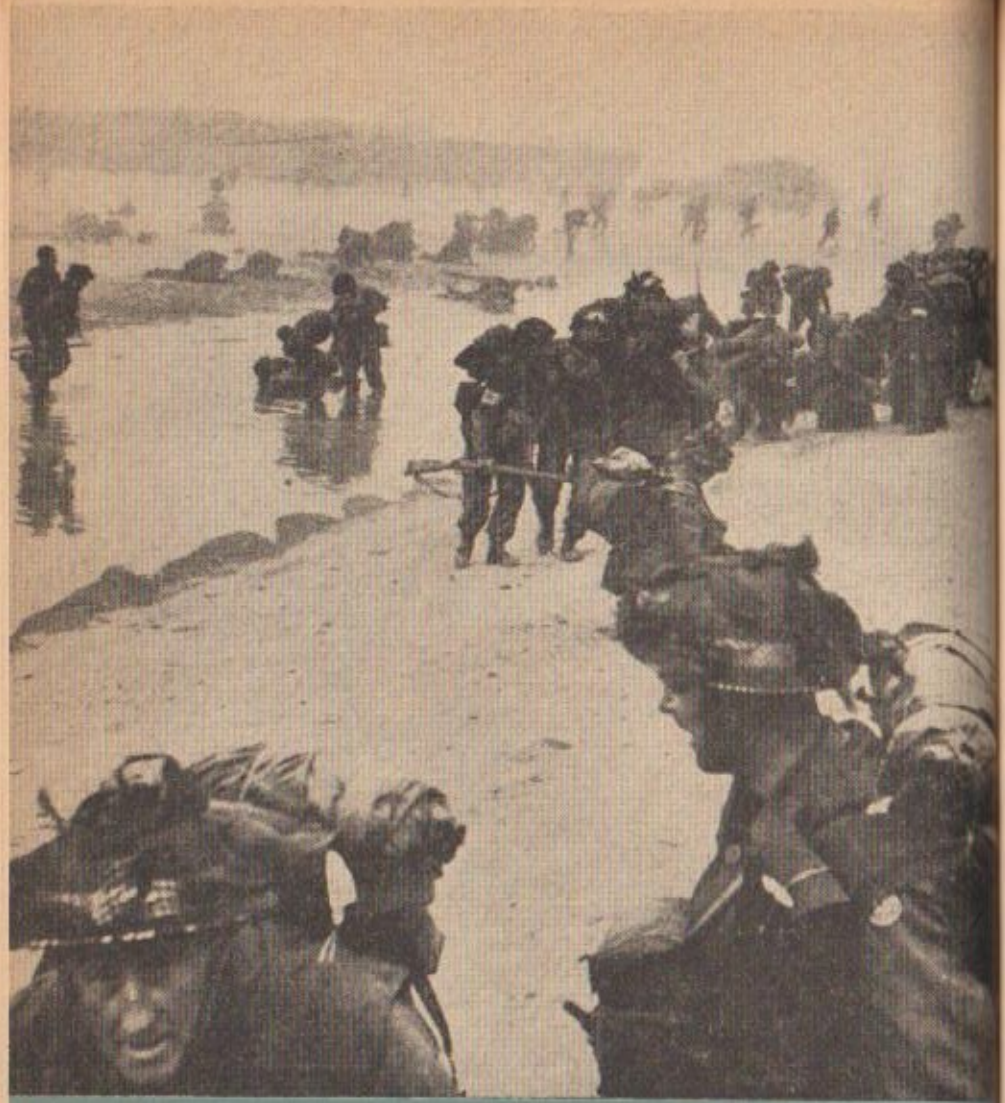
Condensed from Collier's

The Longest Day

A condensation of the book

By Cornelius Ryan

This gripping, authoritative reconstruction of the Allied invasion of Europe tells, for the first time, both sides of the D-Day story. The author interviewed more than 700 people in five countries to piece together a moving record of men and nations in mortal conflict



The slog from the boats to the beaches took a heavy toll. The men who waded ashore realized that resting on the sand meant certain death, and those who could were soon moving inland

The Longest Day

THE VILLAGE was silent in the damp June morning. Its name was La Roche-Guyon and it had sat undisturbed for nearly twelve centuries in a great lazy loop of the Seine roughly halfway between Paris and Normandy. For years people had merely passed through it on their way to somewhere else. Its only distinction had been its castle, the seat of the Dukes of Rochefoucauld.

But now the village had attained a distinction of another kind. For behind its pastoral front La Roche-Guyon was really a prison—the most occupied village in occupied France. For every one of the 543 villagers there were more than three German soldiers. One of these soldiers was Field-Marshal Erwin Rommel, Commander-in-Chief of Army Group B, the most powerful force in the German West. His headquarters was in the castle. From here, in this crucial fifth year of the Second World War, Rommel was preparing to fight the most desperate battle of his career—against the Allied invasion.

Although Rommel did not know it, that battle would begin in forty-eight hours. For this was Sunday, 4th June 1944.

Under Rommel's command more than half a million troops manned defences along a tremendous length of coastline—stretching almost 800 miles, from the dikes of Holland to the Atlantic-washed shores of the Brittany peninsula. His main strength, the 15th Army, was concentrated about the Pas de Calais, at the narrowest point of the Channel between France and England.

Night after night, Allied bombers hit this area. Bomb-weary veterans of the 15th Army joked bitterly that the place for a rest cure was in the 7th Army area in Normandy. Hardly a bomb had fallen there.

For months, behind a fantastic jungle of beach obstacles and minefields, Rommel's troops had waited. But the blue-grey Channel had remained empty of ships. Nothing had happened. From La Roche-Guyon on this gloomy and peaceful Sunday morning, there was still no sign of the Allied invasion.

IN THE ground-floor room he used as an office Rommel was alone, working by the light of a single desk lamp. Although he looked older than his fifty-one years, he remained as tireless as ever. This morning, as usual, he had been up since before four. Now he waited impatiently for six o'clock. At that time he would breakfast with his staff and then depart for Germany—his first leave at home with his family for months.

He was looking forward to the trip, but the decision to go had not been easy to make. On Rommel's shoulders lay the enormous responsibility for repulsing the Allied assault the moment it began. Hitler's Third Reich was reeling from one disaster after another. Day and night thousands of Allied bombers pounded Germany. Russia's massive forces had driven into Poland. Allied troops were at the gates of Rome. Everywhere the Wehrmacht was being driven back and destroyed. Germany was still far from beaten, but the Allied invasion would be the decisive battle—and no one knew it better than Rommel.

Yet this morning Rommel was going home. For months he had hoped to spend a few days in Germany during early June. Also, he wanted to see Hitler. There were many reasons why he now believed he could leave and, although he would never have admitted it, he desperately needed rest.

Only one person really knew the strain that Rommel was under. To his wife, Lucie-Maria, he confided all. In less than four months

he had written her more than forty letters and in almost every other letter he had made a new prediction for the Allied assault.

On 6th April he wrote: "Here the tension is growing from day to day.... It will probably be only weeks that separate us from the decisive events...."

On 6th May: "Still no signs of the British and Americans.... Every day, every week ... we get stronger .... I am looking forward to the battle with confidence.... Perhaps it will come on 15th May, perhaps at the end of the month."

On 15th May: "I can't take many more big (inspection) trips ... because one never knows when the invasion will begin."

On 19th May: "I am wondering if I can spare a few days in June to get away from here. At the moment there isn't a chance."

But there was a chance after all. One of the reasons for Rommel's decision to leave for Germany at this time was his own estimate of the Allies' intentions. Before him now on the desk was Army Group B's weekly report—due to be sent the following day to Field-Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt's headquarters at St.-Germain, outside Paris—and from there to Hitler's headquarters, OKW (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*).

Rommel's estimate read in part that the Allies had reached a "high degree of readiness" and that there was an "increased volume of messages going to the French Resistance." But it went on, "According to past experience this is not indicative that an invasion is imminent...."

Rommel had guessed wrong again.

Now that May had passed Rommel had reached the conclusion that the invasion would not come for several more weeks. He now reasoned—as did Hitler and the German High Command—that the invasion would take place either simultaneously with the Red Army's summer offensive, or shortly thereafter. The Russian attack, they knew, could not begin until after the late thaw in Poland, and therefore they did not think that the offensive could be mounted until the latter part of June.

In the west the weather had been bad for several days, and it promised to be even worse. The 5 a.m. report for 4th June, prepared by Colonel Professor Walter Stöbe, the Luftwaffe's chief meteorologist in Paris, predicted increasing cloudiness, high winds and rain. Even now, a 20–30 m.p.h. wind was blowing in the Channel. To Rommel, it seemed hardly likely that the Allies would dare launch their attack during the next few days. He opened the door of his office and went down to breakfast.

Outside in the village of La Roche-Guyon the bell in the Church of St.-Samson sounded the Angelus. Each note fought for its existence against the wind. It was 6 a.m.

ROMMEL had been in France since November 1943. To the humiliation of von Rundstedt, the aristocratic sixty-eight-year-old Commander-in-Chief, West, responsible for the defence of all western Europe, Rommel had arrived with a *Gummibefehl*, an "elastic directive," ordering him to inspect the coastal fortifications—Hitler's much publicized "Atlantic Wall"—and then to report directly back to the Fuehrer's headquarters.

The Atlantic Wall was one of Hitler's relatively new obsessions. Up to 1941 victory had seemed so certain to the Fuehrer and his strutting Nazis that there was no need for coastal fortifications. After the collapse of France Hitler had expected the British to sue for peace. They didn't; and as time passed the situation changed. Britain began staging a slow but sure recovery.

Hitler, by now deeply involved in Russia—he attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941—saw that the coast of France was no longer an offensive springboard. It was now a soft spot in his defences. And in December 1941, after America had entered the war, the Fuehrer ranted to the world that "a belt of strongholds and gigantic fortifications runs from Kirkenes (on the Norwegian-Finnish frontier) to the Pyrénées (on the Franco-Spanish border) . . . and it is my unshakeable decision to make this front impregnable against every enemy." It was a wild, impossible boast. Discounting the

many indentations, this coastline stretches for over 3,000 miles.

General Franz Halder, then Chief of the German High Command, well remembers the first time Hitler outlined his fantastic scheme. Halder, who would never forgive Hitler for refusing to invade Britain, was cool to the whole idea. He ventured the opinion that fortifications "if they were needed" should be constructed "behind the coastline, out of range of naval guns"; otherwise troops might be pinned down. Hitler dashed across the room to a table on which there was a large map and for a full five minutes threw an unforgettable tantrum. Pounding the map with his clenched fist, he screamed, "Bombs and shells will fall here . . . here . . . here . . . and here . . . in front of the wall, behind it and on it . . . but the troops will be safe in the wall! Then they'll come out and fight!"

Halder said nothing, but he knew, as did the other generals in the High Command, that despite all the Reich's intoxicating victories the Fuehrer already feared a second front—an invasion.

Still, little work was done on the fortifications. In 1942, as the tide of war began to swing against the Germans, commandos began raiding the impregnable fortress of Europe. Then came the bloodiest raid of the war, when more than 5,000 heroic Canadians landed at the heavily defended port of Dieppe. The raid shocked Hitler. He thundered at his generals that the wall must be completed at top speed. Construction was to be rushed "fanatically."

It was. Thousands of slave labourers worked night and day to build the fortifications. Millions of tons of concrete were poured in—so much that all over Hitler's Europe it became impossible to get concrete for anything else. Staggering quantities of steel were ordered, but this commodity was in such short supply that the engineers were often forced to do without it. So great was the demand for materials and equipment that parts of the old French Maginot Line and Germany's frontier fortifications (the Siegfried Line) were cannibalized. By the end of 1943, although over half a million men were working on it, the wall was far from finished.

Hitler knew that invasion was inevitable, and now he was faced

with yet another great problem: finding the divisions to man his growing defences. In Russia, division after division was being lost. In Italy, knocked out of the war after the invasion of Sicily, thousands of troops were still pinned down. So, by 1944, Hitler was forced to bolster his garrisons in the west with a strange conglomeration of replacements—old men and young boys, the remnants of divisions shattered on the Russian front, impressed "volunteers" from occupied countries. Questionable as these troops might prove to be in battle, they filled the gaps. Also, Hitler still had a hard core of seasoned troops and Panzers. By D-Day German strength in the west would total a formidable fifty-eight divisions. Not all these divisions would be up to full strength, but Hitler was still relying on his Atlantic Wall—that would make the difference.

What Rommel saw when he inspected the wall in November 1943 appalled him. In only a few places were the fortifications completed, and in some places work had not even begun. True, even in its present state, the Atlantic Wall was a formidable barrier. Where it was finished, it fairly bristled with heavy guns.

But there were not enough to suit Rommel. There was not enough of anything to stop the onslaught that Rommel—always remembering his crushing defeat at the hands of Montgomery in North Africa—knew must surely come. To his critical eye the Atlantic Wall was a farce. He denounced it as a "figment of Hitler's *Wolkenkuckucksheim* (cloud cuckoo-land)."

Von Rundstedt heartily concurred with Rommel's scathing denunciation. (It was probably the only time that he completely agreed with Rommel on anything.) The wise old von Rundstedt had never believed in fixed defences. He had master-minded the attack outflanking the Maginot Line in 1940 that had led to the collapse of France. To him Hitler's Atlantic Wall was an "enormous bluff . . . more for the German people than for the enemy." It would "temporarily obstruct" the Allied attack, but it would not stop it. Nothing, von Rundstedt was convinced, could prevent the initial landings from being successful. His plan to defeat the invasion was

to hold the great mass of his troops back from the coast and to attack *after* the Allied troops had landed.

With this theory Rommel disagreed completely. He was positive that there was only one way to smash the attack: meet it head-on. There would be no time to bring up reinforcements. He was certain that they would be destroyed by air attacks or naval or artillery bombardment. Everything, in his view, from troops to Panzer divisions, had to be held ready at the coast or just behind it.

Captain Hellmuth Lang, his thirty-six-year-old *aide*, well remembers a day when Rommel summed up his strategy. They had stood on a deserted beach and Rommel, a short, stocky figure in a heavy greatcoat with an old muffler round his throat, stalked up and down waving his "informal" marshal's baton, a two-foot-long, silver-topped, black stick with a red, black and white tassel. He pointed to the sands and said, "The war will be won or lost on the beaches. We'll have only one chance to stop the enemy and that's while he's in the water, struggling to get ashore. Reserves will never get up to the point of attack and it's foolish even to consider them. The *Hauptkampflinie* (main line of resistance) will be here. . . . Everything we have must be on the coast. Believe me, Lang, the first twenty-four hours of the invasion will be decisive. . . . For the Allies, as well as Germany, it will be the longest day."

Hitler had approved Rommel's plan in general, and from then on von Rundstedt became merely a figure-head. In a few short months Rommel's ruthless drive changed the whole picture. On every beach where he considered a landing possible he ordered crude anti-invasion obstacles to be erected. These obstacles—jagged triangles of steel; saw-toothed, gatelike structures of iron; metal-tipped wooden stakes and concrete cones—were planted just below high- and low-tide water-marks. Strapped to each one were explosives.

Rommel's strange inventions (he had designed most of them himself) were both simple and deadly. Their object was to impale and destroy troop-filled landing-craft or to obstruct them long enough for shore batteries to get on target. More than half a million

of these lethal obstacles now stretched along the Atlantic coastline.

Still Rommel, the perfectionist, was not satisfied. In the sands, in bluffs, in gullies and pathways leading off the beaches, he ordered mines to be laid—all varieties, from the large pancake type, capable of blowing off a tank's tracks, to the small S-mine which, when stepped on, bounded into the air and exploded level with a man's midriff. Over five million of these mines now infested the coast. Before the attack came, Rommel hoped to have another six million planted along one beach alone. He aimed for a total of fifty million mines.

Overlooking the coastline, behind this jungle of mines and obstacles, Rommel's troops waited in pillboxes, concrete bunkers and communication trenches, all surrounded by layers of barbed wire. From these positions every piece of artillery that the field-marshal had been able to lay hands on looked down on sands and sea, already sighted in to give overlapping fields of fire.

Rommel took advantage of every new technique or development. Where he was short of guns, he positioned batteries of rocket launchers or multiple mortar throwers. At one place he even had miniature robot tanks called "Goliaths." These devices, capable of carrying more than half a ton of explosives, could be guided by remote control from the fortifications down on to the beaches and detonated among troops or landing-craft.

Never before in the history of warfare had a more deadly array of defences been prepared for an invading force. Yet Rommel was not content. He wanted more pillboxes . . . more beach obstacles . . . more mines . . . more guns and troops. Most of all he wanted the massive Panzer divisions which were lying in reserve far from the coast. But now, at this crucial moment, Hitler insisted on holding these armoured formations under his personal authority. Rommel needed at least five Panzer divisions at the coast. There was only one way to get them: he would see Hitler. Rommel had often told Lang, "The last man who sees Hitler wins the game." On this leaden morning in La Roche-Guyon, as he prepared to leave for

Germany and the long drive home, Rommel was more determined than ever to win the game.

AT 15TH ARMY headquarters near the Belgian border, 125 miles away from La Roche-Guyon, one man was glad to see the morning of 4th June arrive. Lieutenant-Colonel Hellmuth Meyer sat in his office, haggard and blear-eyed. He had not had a really good night's sleep since 1st June. But the night that had just passed had been the worst yet; he would never forget it.

Meyer had a frustrating, nerve-racking job. He headed the only counter-intelligence team on the invasion front. The heart of his set-up was a thirty-man radio-interception crew whose job was just to listen all the time. But each man was an expert who spoke three languages fluently and there was hardly a word, hardly a single stutter of Morse code, whispering through the ether from Allied sources that they did not hear. Meyer's men were so experienced and their equipment so sensitive that they were even able to pick up calls from radio transmitters in Military Police jeeps in Britain, more than a hundred miles away. This had been a great help to Meyer. British MP's directing troop convoys had helped him to compile a list of the various divisions stationed in Britain.

Meyer was good at his job. Several times a day he sifted through sheaves of monitored reports, always searching for the suspicious, the unusual—even the unbelievable.

During the night his men had picked up the unbelievable. The message, a high-speed Associated Press cable, had been monitored just after dark. It read: URGENT PRESS ASSOCIATED NYK FLASH EISENHOWER'S HQ ANNOUNCES ALLIED LANDINGS IN FRANCE.

Meyer was dumbfounded. His first impulse was to alert headquarters. But he paused and calmed down: because Meyer knew the message had to be wrong.

There were two reasons why. First, there was a complete absence of any activity along the invasion front. (He would have known immediately if there had been an attack.) Second, in January Admiral

Wilhelm Canaris, then Chief of German Intelligence, had given Meyer the details of a two-part signal which he said the Allies would use to alert the underground prior to the invasion.

Canaris had warned him that the Allies would broadcast hundreds of messages to the underground in the months preceding the attack. Only a few of these would actually relate to D-Day; the remainder would be fake, deliberately designed to mislead and confuse.Canaris had been explicit: Meyer was to monitor all messages in order not to miss the important one.

At first Meyer had been sceptical. It had seemed madness to him to depend entirely on only one message. But on the night of 1st June his men had intercepted the first part of the Allied message—exactly as described by Canaris. It was not unlike the hundreds of other coded sentences that were read out to the underground after the regular BBC news broadcasts. Most of the messages—given in French, Dutch, Danish and Norwegian—were meaningless: "*The Trojan War will not be held.*" "*Molasses tomorrow will spurt forth cognac.*" "*John has a long moustache.*"

But the message that followed the BBC nine o'clock news on the night of 1st June was one that Meyer understood only too well. "Kindly listen now to a few personal messages," said the voice in French. Instantly Sergeant Walter Reichling switched on a wire recorder. There was a pause, and then "*Les sanglots longs des violons de l'automne*" ("The long sobs of the violins of autumn").

Reichling rushed out of the bunker to Meyer's quarters. The sergeant burst into Meyer's office and excitedly said, "Sir, the first part of the message—it's here!"

Together they returned to the radio bunker where Meyer listened to the recording. There it was—the message that Canaris had warned them to expect. It was the first phrase of "*Chanson d'Automne*" ("Song of Autumn") by the nineteenth-century French poet Paul Verlaine. According to Canaris's information, this line from Verlaine was to be transmitted on the "1st or 15th of a month . . . and will represent the first half of a message announcing the invasion."

The last half of the message would be the following phrase of the Verlaine poem, "*Blessent mon cœur d'une langueur monotone*" ("Wound my heart with a monotonous languor"). When this was broadcast it would mean, according to Canaris, that "the invasion will begin within forty-eight hours . . . the count starting at midnight on the day of the transmission."

Immediately on hearing the recording of the first phrase from Verlaine, Meyer informed the 15th Army's Chief of Staff, Brigadier-General Wilhelm Hofmann. "The first message has come," he told Hofmann. "Now something is going to happen."

Hofmann immediately gave the alarm to alert the 15th Army.

Meyer meanwhile sent the message by teleprinter to Hitler's headquarters (OKW). Next he telephoned von Rundstedt's headquarters (OB West) and Rommel's headquarters (Army Group B).

At OKW the message was delivered to General Alfred Jodl, Chief of Operations. The message remained on Jodl's desk. He did not order an alert. He assumed von Rundstedt had done so; but von Rundstedt thought Rommel's headquarters had issued the order. (Rommel must have known about the message; but from his own estimate of Allied intentions it is obvious that he must have discounted it.)

Along the invasion coast only one army was placed at readiness: the 15th. The 7th Army, holding the coast of Normandy, heard nothing about the message and was not alerted.

On the nights of the second and third of June the first part of the message was again broadcast. Within the hour after the message was repeated on the night of 3rd June, the Associated Press message regarding the Allied landings was picked up. If the Canaris warning was right, Meyer knew that the AP flash must be wrong. The flash turned out to be the weirdest kind of security leak. During the night an AP teleprinter operator in England had been practising on an idle machine in an effort to improve her speed. Through an error the perforated tape carrying her practice "flash" somehow preceded the usual nightly Russian communiqué. The mistake was discovered

and corrected after only thirty seconds, but the word was out.

After his first moment of panic, Meyer had bet on Canaris. Now he was weary, but elated. The coming of the dawn and the continued peacefulness along the front more than proved him right. Now there was nothing to do but wait for the last half of the vital alert, which might come at any moment.

As Meyer settled down to wait, the commander of Army Group B, 125 miles away, was preparing to leave for Germany. At 7 a.m. the field-marshal's car, with Rommel in the seat beside the chauffeur, drove through the village and turned left on to the main Paris road.

Leaving La Roche-Guyon on this particular dismal Sunday morning of 4th June suited Rommel. The timing of the trip could not have been better. Beside him on the seat was a cardboard box containing a pair of hand-made grey suède shoes, size five and a half, for his wife. There was a very human reason why he wanted to be with her on Tuesday, 6th June. It was her birthday.*

IN BRITAIN it was 8 a.m. (there was one hour's difference between British Double Summer Time and German Central Time). In a caravan in a rain-washed wood near Portsmouth, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Allied Supreme Commander, was sound asleep after having been up nearly all night.

Although he could have moved into the more comfortable naval headquarters at big, sprawling Southwick House two miles away,

*Since the war, many of Rommel's senior officers have stood shoulder to shoulder in an effort to alibi the circumstances surrounding Rommel's absence from the front on 4th, 5th June and for the best part of D-Day itself. In books, articles and interviews they have stated that Rommel left for Germany on 5th June. This is not true. They also claim that Hitler ordered him to Germany. This is not true. The only person at Hitler's headquarters who knew of Rommel's intended visit was the Fuehrer's adjutant, Rudolf Schmündt. General Walter Warlimont, deputy chief of operations at OKW at that time, has told me that neither Jodl, nor Keitel nor he himself was aware that Rommel was in Germany. Even on D-Day Warlimont thought that Rommel was at his headquarters conducting the battle. The date of Rommel's departure from Normandy was 4th June: the incontrovertible proof lies in the meticulously recorded Army Group B War Diary, which gives the exact time.—C. R.

Eisenhower had decided against it. He wanted to be as close as possible to the ports where his troops were loading.

Eisenhower's long, low three-and-a-half-ton caravan had three small, sparsely furnished compartments serving as a bedroom, living-room and study. From this trailer he commanded almost three million Allied troops. More than half his immense command was American. British and Canadian forces together totalled about one million, apart from the Free French, Polish, Czech, Belgian, Norwegian and Dutch contingents.

Four months before, in the directive appointing him Supreme Commander, the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington had spelt out his assignment in one precise paragraph. It read: "You will enter the continent of Europe and, in conjunction with the other United Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces . . . ."

Intensive military planning for the invasion had been going on for some time, but men had been thinking about the assault almost from the time of Dunkirk. Months before anyone knew that Eisenhower would be appointed Supreme Commander, a small Anglo-American group of officers under Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Morgan had been laying the groundwork for the assault. Ultimately their studies, enlarged and modified into the final plan (code-named Overlord) after Eisenhower took over, called for more men, ships, planes and materials than had ever before been assembled for a single military operation.

Even before the plan reached its final form an unprecedented flow of men and supplies began pouring into Britain. Soon there were so many Americans in the small towns and villages that the English people left in them were often outnumbered, and by May southern England looked like a huge arsenal. Hidden in the woods were mountainous piles of ammunition. Stretching across the countryside, bumper-to-bumper, were tanks, half-tracks, armoured cars, trucks, jeeps and ambulances—more than 50,000 of them. In the fields were long lines of howitzers and anti-aircraft guns, great quantities of

prefabricated materials, from Nissen huts to airstrips. The most staggering sights of all were the valleys filled with long lines of railway rolling stock: almost 1,000 brand-new locomotives and nearly 20,000 tankers and goods wagons, most of which would be used to replace shattered French equipment after the beach-head had been established.

There were also strange new devices of war. There were tanks that could swim and others equipped with great chain flails that beat the ground in front of them to explode mines. Perhaps strangest of all were two man-made harbours that were to be towed across to the Normandy beaches. The harbours, called "Mulberries," consisted, first, of an outer breakwater made up of great steel floats. Next came 145 huge concrete caissons in various sizes which were to be sunk butt-to-butt to make an inner breakwater. The largest of these caissons had crew quarters and anti-aircraft guns and, when it was being towed, looked like a five-story office block lying on its side. Within these man-made harbours freighters as large as Liberty ships could unload. Smaller ships, like coasters or landing-craft, could dump their cargoes at massive steel pierheads where waiting lorries would run them to shore over floating pontoon-supported piers. Beyond the "Mulberries" a line of sixty concrete blockships was to be sunk as an additional breakwater.

All through May, men and supplies moved down to the ports and the loading areas. In cities of Nissen huts and tents men slept in bunks piled three and four deep. Mess queues were sometimes a quarter of a mile long. In the last week of May, troops and supplies began loading on to the transports and the landing-ships. The time had finally come.

EISENHOWER and his commanders had done everything to ensure that the invasion would have every possible chance of success at the lowest cost in lives. But now, after all the years of military and political planning, Operation Overlord lay at the mercy of the elements. The weather was bad. Eisenhower was helpless. All he

could do was to wait and hope that conditions would improve. But now, on Sunday, 4th June, no matter what happened, he would be forced to make a momentous decision by the end of the day: to go —or to postpone the assault. The success or failure of Operation Overlord might depend on that decision. And nobody could make that decision for him. The responsibility would be his, and his alone.

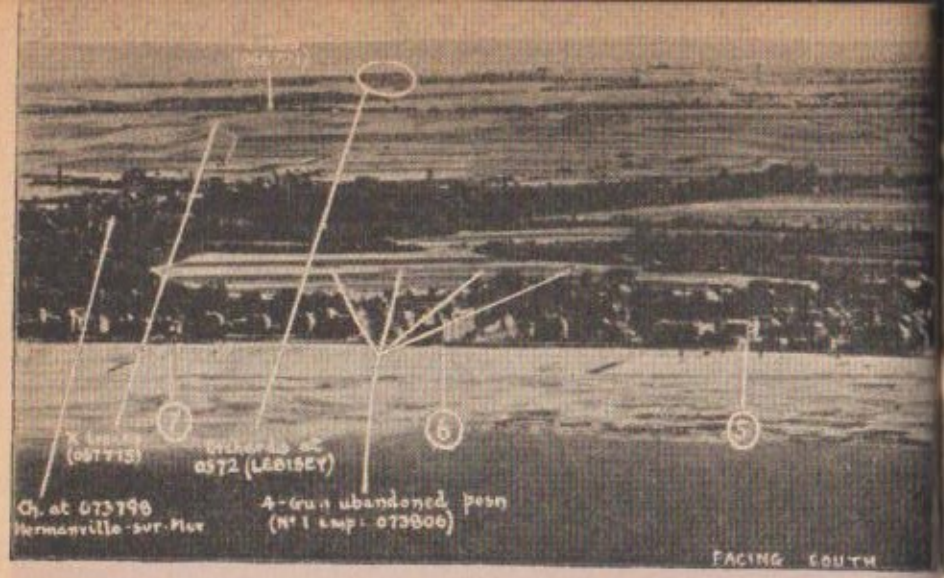
Eisenhower was faced with a dreadful dilemma. On 17th May he had decided that D-Day would have to be one of three days in June —the 5th, 6th or 7th. Meteorological studies had shown that two of the vital weather requirements for the invasion could be expected for Normandy on those days: a late-rising moon and, shortly after dawn, a low tide.

The paratroopers and glider-borne infantry who would launch the assault—some 22,000 men of the British 6th Airborne Division and the US 101st and 82nd Divisions—needed some moonlight. But their surprise attack depended on darkness up to the time they arrived over the dropping zones. Thus their critical demand was for a late-rising moon.

The seaborne landings had to take place when the tide was low enough to expose Rommel's beach obstacles. On this tide the timing of the whole invasion would depend. And to complicate the meteorological calculations further, follow-up troops landing much later in the day would also need a low tide—and it had to come before darkness set in.

These two critical factors of moonlight and tide shackled Eisenhower. Tide alone reduced the number of days for the attack in any one month to six—and three of those were moonless.

But that was not all. There were many other factors. First, all the services wanted long hours of daylight and good visibility to help them identify the beaches; for the navy and air force to spot their targets; and to reduce the hazard of collision when the mass of ships began manoeuvring almost side by side in the Bay of the Seine. Second, a calm sea was required. Apart from the havoc a rough sea



Before D-Day thousands of reconnaissance photographs were taken to help the Allies plot the defences which Rommel (third from right, below) was frantically preparing

The decision to attack was made when Eisenhower and Montgomery saw the weather chart (below) which promised fair conditions for twenty-four hours

21 ARMY GROUP

PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE C-in-C

To be read out to all Troops

1. The time has come to deal the enemy a terrific blow in Western Europe.

The blow will be struck by the combined sea, land, and air forces of the Allies—together constituting one great Allied team, under the supreme command of General Eisenhower.

2. On the eve of this great adventure I send my best wishes to every soldier in the Allied team.

To us is given the honour of striking a blow for freedom which will live in history; and in the better days that lie ahead men will speak with pride of our doings. We have a great and a righteous cause.

Let us pray that "The Lord Mighty in Battle" will go forth with our armies, and that His special providence will aid us in the struggle.

3. I want every soldier to know that I have complete confidence in the successful outcome of the operations that we are now about to begin.

With stout hearts, and with enthusiasm for the contest, let us go forward to victory.

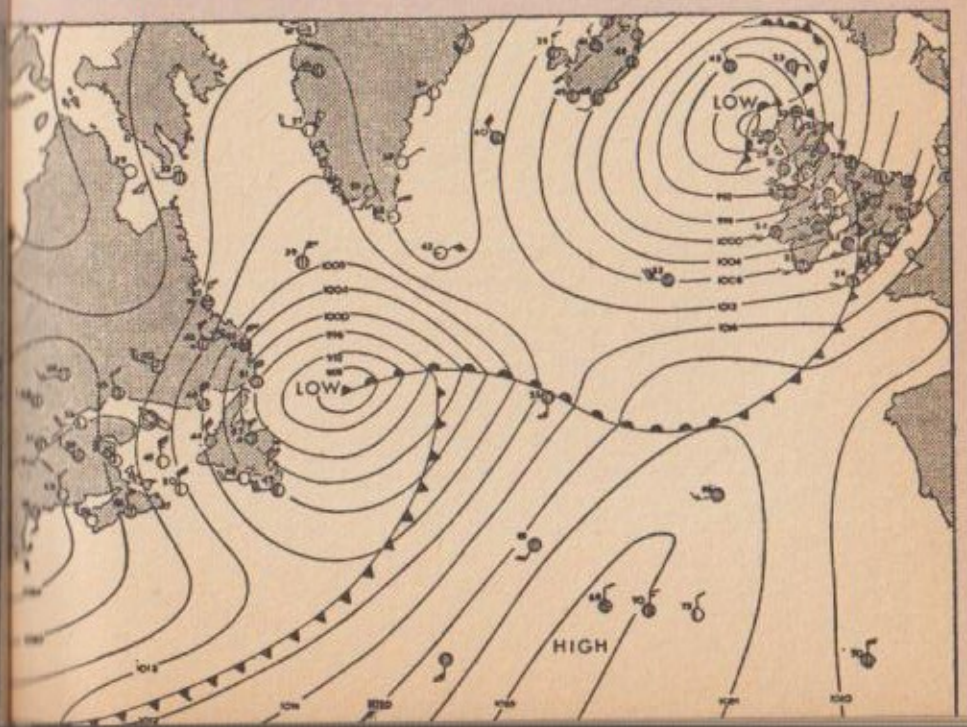
4. And, as we enter the battle, let us recall the words of a famous soldier spoken many years ago:—

"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dare not put it to the touch,
To win or lose it all."

5. Good luck to each one of you. And good hunting on the mainland of Europe.

B. L. Montgomery
General
C.-in-C 21 Army Group.

1944.



might cause to the fleet, sea-sickness could leave the troops helpless long before they even set foot on the beaches. Third, low winds, blowing in-shore, were needed to clear the beaches of smoke so that targets would not be obscured. And, finally, the Allies would require three more quiet days after D-Day for the quick build-up of men and supplies.

Nobody at Supreme Headquarters expected perfect conditions on D-Day, least of all Eisenhower. In countless dry runs with his meteorological staff he had schooled himself to recognize and weigh all the factors which would give him the minimum acceptable conditions for the attack. But, according to his meteorologists, the chances were about ten to one against Normandy's having, on any one day in June, weather which would meet even the minimal requirements for a successful attack.

Of the three possible days for the invasion Eisenhower had chosen the 5th, so that if there were a postponement he could launch the assault on the 6th. But if he ordered the landings for the 6th and then had to cancel them again, the problem of refuelling the returning convoys might prevent him from attacking on the 7th. There would then be two choices. He could postpone D-Day until the next period when the tides were right—19th June. But 19th June was moonless: the airborne armies would therefore be forced to attack in darkness. The other alternative was to wait until July—and that long a postponement, as he was later to recall, "was too bitter to contemplate."

So terrifying was the thought of long postponement that many of Eisenhower's most cautious commanders were prepared to risk attack instead on the 8th or 9th. They did not see how a quarter of a million men—more than half of them already briefed—could be kept isolated and bottled-up for weeks in ships, in embarkation areas and on airfields without the secret of the invasion leaking out. For everybody the prospect of a postponement was grim. But it was Eisenhower who would have to make the decision. On Sunday, 4th June, at 5 a.m.—about the time that Rommel got up at La Roche-

Guyon—Eisenhower made a fateful decision: because of unfavourable weather conditions the Allied invasion would be postponed twenty-four hours. If conditions improved, D-Day would be Tuesday, 6th June.

AT DAWN on Sunday, 4th June, Commander George Hoffman, the thirty-three-year-old skipper of the destroyer USS *Corry*, looked through his binoculars. A long column of ships was ploughing steadily across the English Channel behind him. They were on course and exactly on time. France lay ahead, now only forty miles away.

The young commander was immensely proud to be leading this magnificent convoy. But as he looked at it through his glasses he knew it was a sitting duck for the enemy.

Ahead were the mine-sweepers—six small ships spread out in a diagonal formation like one side of an inverted V. Behind the mine-sweepers came the lean, sleek shapes of the "shepherds," the escorting destroyers. And behind them, stretching as far as the eye could see, came a great procession of lumbering, unwieldy landing-ships carrying thousands of troops, tanks, guns, vehicles and ammunition. To Hoffman it was quite a sight. Estimating the distance separating one ship from the next and knowing the total number of vessels, he reckoned that the tail end of this fantastic parade must still be in Plymouth harbour.

And this was only *one* convoy. Hoffman knew that dozens of others had been due to sail when he did, or would leave England during the day. That night all of them would converge on the Bay of the Seine. By the morning of 5th June, according to plan, an immense and frightening fleet of 2,700 ships would stand off the invasion beaches of Normandy.

Suddenly the *Corry's* bridge telephone buzzed. Hoffman picked up the receiver. "Bridge," he said. "This is the captain." He listened for a moment. "Are you quite sure?" he asked. "Has the message been repeated?" Hoffman listened a moment longer; then

he replaced the receiver on its cradle. It was unbelievable: the whole convoy had been ordered back to England. What could have happened? Had the invasion been postponed?

Hoffman's job and that of the other destroyers now was to wheel this monstrous convoy round—and quickly. Because he was in the lead, his immediate concern was the flotilla of mine-sweepers several miles ahead. He could not contact them by radio because a strict radio silence had been imposed—and they had to be swung round first. "All engines ahead full speed," Hoffman ordered. "Close up on the mine-sweepers. Signalman on the light."

As the *Corry* raced forward, Hoffman looked back and saw the destroyers behind him wheel and swing round the flanks of the convoy. Now, with signal lights blinking, they began the tremendous job of turning the convoy round.

In the huge Operations Centre at Allied Naval Headquarters in Southwick House, they waited for the ships to return. The long, high room with its white-and-gold wallpaper was the scene of intense activity. One entire wall was covered by a gigantic chart of the English Channel. Every few minutes two Wrens, working from a moving step-ladder, plotted the new positions of each returning convoy. Staff officers from each of the Allied services watched in silence as each new report came in. Outwardly they appeared calm, but there was no disguising the strain that everybody felt. Not only must the convoys wheel about, almost under the very noses of the enemy, and return to England along specific, mine-swept tracks; they were now faced with the threat of another enemy—a storm at sea. Already the wind in the Channel was blowing up to thirty miles an hour, with waves up to five feet—and the weather was forecast to get worse.

As the minutes passed, the face of the chart reflected the orderly pattern of the recall. There were streams of markers back-tracking up the Irish Sea, clustered in the vicinity of the Isle of Wight and

huddled together in various ports and anchorages along the south-west coast of England. It would take some of the convoys all day to put back to port, but there was hope that they would make it.

The location of each convoy and that of nearly every other ship of the Allied Fleet could be seen at a glance on the chart. But two vessels were not shown—a pair of midget submarines. They seemed to have disappeared completely off the chart.

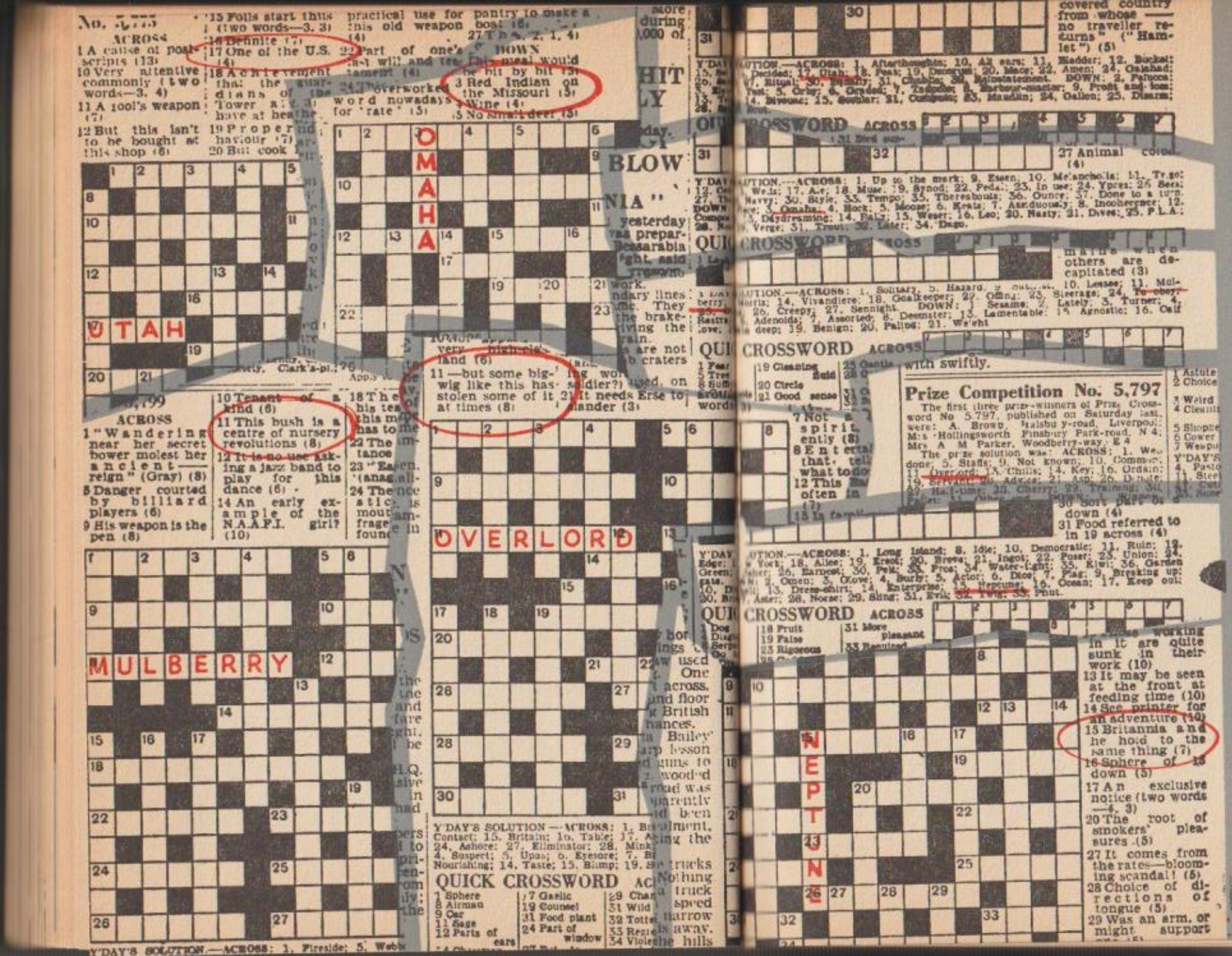
In an office near by, a pretty twenty-four-year-old Wren officer wondered how soon her husband would get back to his home port. Naomi Honour was a bit anxious but not unduly worried yet—even though her friends in "Ops" seemed to know nothing about the whereabouts of the husband, Lieutenant George Honour, and his fifty-seven-foot-long midget submarine, the X23.

One mile off the coast of France a periscope broke the surface of the water. Thirty feet below, crouching in the cramped control-room of the X23, George Honour pushed his cap back. "Well, gentlemen," he recalls saying, "let's take a look-see."

Cushioning one eye against the rubber-cupped eyepiece, he slowly pivoted the periscope round and, as the distorting shimmer of water disappeared from the lens, the blurred image before him straightened out and became the sleepy resort town of Ouistreham at the mouth of the Orne. They were so close in and his view was so magnified that Honour could see smoke rising from chimneys and, in the far distance, a plane that had just taken off from Carpiquet airfield near Caen. He could also see the enemy. Fascinated, he watched German troops calmly working among the anti-invasion obstacles on the sandy beaches that stretched away on either side.

It was a great moment for the twenty-six-year-old RNR lieutenant. Standing back from the periscope, he said to Lieutenant Lionel Lyne, the navigational expert in charge of the operation, "Take a look, 'Thin'—we're almost bang on the target."

In a way the invasion had already begun. The first craft and the first men of the Allied Forces were in position off the beaches of Normandy. Directly ahead of the X23 lay the British-Canadian


No. 5,795
ACROSS
1 A cause of post-scripts (13)
10 Very attentive commonly (two words—3, 4)
11 A fool's weapon (7)
12 But this isn't to be bought at this shop (8)
15 Folls start thus (two words—3, 3)
16 Bennite (7)
17 One of the U.S. (4)
18 A chie vement that the sugar-plums of the Tower are to have at heathe
19 Proper rid (harbour (7)
20 But cook
DOWN
3 Red Indian on the Missouri (5)
4 Wine (4)
5 No Small deer (5)
24 Overworked word nowadays for 'rate' (5)
OMAHA
UTAH
BLOW
NIA"
yesterday
was prepar-
Bessarabia
ght, said
work.
ndary lines
me. They
the brake-
iving the
rain.
are not
b craters
land (6)
11—but some big-wig like this has stolen some of it 21 It needs Erse to at times (8)
lander (3)
No. 5,799
ACROSS
1 "Wandering near her secret bower molest her ancient—reign" (Gray) (8)
5 Danger courted by billiard players (6)
9 His weapon is the pen (8)
10 Tenant of a kind (6)
11 This bush is a centre of nursery revolutions (8)
12 It is no use asking a jazz band to play for this dance (6)
14 An early example of the N.A.A.F.I. girl? (10)
18 The his tea this m has to me
22 The tance
23 "Eas (anag
24 The ic is mou frage found
OVERLORD
MULBERRY
Y'DAY'S SOLUTION.—ACROSS: 1, Fireside; 5, Webb
QUICK CROSSWORD
1 Sphere
8 Airman
9 Car
11 Sage
12 Parts of ears
7 Gaelic
19 Counsel
31 Food plant
24 Part of window
29 Chan
31 Wild
32 Totte
33 Regre
34 Violet
away.
hills
practical use for pantry to make a this old weapon boat (6)
27 T h s. 2, 1, 4)
more during ,000 of
HIT
LY
day.
OU
31
Y'DAY
15. Be
go. a
Ey
13. To
28. A
DOWN
Compos
28. No
QUI
1 Lea
berry,
Rastu
love;
QUI
1 Fear
5 Tree
8 Sum
round
words
Y'DAY
Edge;
Green;
gate.
10. D
20. Br
QUI
1 Dog
4 Disg
5 Serp
Og
bor
ings
aw used
t. One
across.
nd floor
British
hances.
Bailey'
rp lesson
d guns to
wooded
road was
parently
d been
ing the
trucks
Nothing
truck
sped
narrow
away.
hills
Y'DAY'S SOLUTION.—ACROSS: 1, Beastment, Contact; 15, Britain; 16, Table; 17, A
24, Ashore; 27, Eliminator; 28, Mink
4, Suspect; 5, Upas; 6, Eyesore; 7, Bi
Nourishing; 14, Taste; 15, Blimp; 19, Se
30
covered country from whose —— no traveller returns" ("Hamlet") (5)
LUTION.—ACROSS: 1, Afterthoughts; 10, All ears; 11, Decided; 17, Utah; 18, Peak; 19, Dungeon; 20, Mace; 22, Amen; 24, Galahad; Ritual; 30, Beauty; 31, Cheddar; 32, Malostaisement. DOWN: 2, Pahoes: Tut; 5, Orby; 6, Gradel; 7, Tadpole; 8, Harbour-master; 9, Profit and loss; 4, Bivouac; 15, Soudan; 21, Compose; 23, Maudlin; 24, Gallon; 25, Disarm;
ROSSWORD ACROSS
32
27 Animal colour (4)
LUTION.—ACROSS: 1, Up to the mark; 9, Essen; 10, Melancholia; 11, Trap; Wells; 17, Ace; 18, Muse; 19, Synod; 22, Pedal; 23, In use; 24, Ypres; 25 Seas; Navy; 30, Style; 33, Tempo; 35, Theresbouts; 36, Ounce; 37, Done to a turn. ace; 3, Omaha; 4, Hock; 5, Moose; 6, Keats; 7, Assiduously; 8, Incoherence; 12, Dilydressming; 14, Pally; 15, Weser; 16, Leo; 20, Nasty; 21, Dives; 25, P.L.A.; Verge; 31, Trout; 32, Later; 34, Dago.
CROSSWORD ACROSS
maths when others are decapitated (3)
LUTION.—ACROSS: 1, Solitary, 5, Hazard, 9, Outside, 10, Lessee; 11, Mulberry; 14, Vivandiere; 18, Goalkeeper; 22, Oiling; 23, Steerage; 24, To obey; 26, Creeps; 27, Sennight. DOWN: 1, Sesame; 2, Lately; 3, Turner; 4, Adenoids; 7, Assorted; 8, Deemster; 13, Lamentable; 15, Agnostic; 16, Calf deep; 19, Benign; 20, Paling; 21, Weight
CROSSWORD ACROSS
with swiftly.
19 Cleaning fluid
20 Circle
21 Good sense
7 Not a spirit ently (8)
8 Entertai that tell what to do
12 This Ra often in (7)
15 Is fare
Prize Competition No. 5,797
The first three prize-winners of Prize Crossword No 5,797, published on Saturday last, were: A. Brown, Walsbury-road, Liverpool; Miss Hollingsworth Finsbury Park-road, N 4; Mrs A M Parker, Woodberry-way, E 4
The prize solution was: ACROSS: 1, Weedone; 5, Staffs; 9, Not known; 10, Commerce; 11, Overlord; 13, Chills; 14, Key; 16, Ordain; 19, Serpent; 20, Adyes; 21, Asp; 26, Dilute; 27, Ha(l)ume; 30, Cherry; 32, Training; 34, Bucket; 35, Ashore; 36, Sunny; 37, Sunne
down (4)
31 Food referred to in 19 across (4)
LUTION.—ACROSS: 1, Long Island; 8, Idle; 10, Democratic; 11, Ruin; 12, York; 18, Allee; 19, Erect; 20, Brow; 21, Ingot; 22, Poser; 25, Union; 24, Fisher; 26, Earnest; 30, Pelt; 33, Froe; 34, Water-tight; 35, Kiwi; 36, Garden N; 2, Omen; 3, Grove; 4, Burly; 5, Actor; 6, Dice; 7, Flag; 9, Breaking up; 13, Dress-shirt; 14, Enterprise; 15, Neptune; 16, Ocean; 17, Keep out; Aster; 28, Morse; 29, Sling; 31, Evil; 32, Twig; 33, Prut.
CROSSWORD ACROSS
18 Fruit
19 False
23 Rigorous
31 More pleasant
33 Required
NEPTUNE
working in it are quite sunk in their work (10)
13 It may be seen at the front at feeding time (10)
14 See printer for an adventure (10)
15 Britannia and he hold to the same thing (7)
16 Sphere of 15 down (5)
17 An exclusive notice (two words—4, 3)
20 The root of smokers' pleasures (5)
27 It comes from the rates—blooming scandal! (5)
28 Choice of directions of tongue (5)
29 Was an arm, or might support

M15 and the Allied Supreme Command took a great interest in *The Daily Telegraph's* crossword in the weeks before D-Day.

By a fantastic coincidence, solutions to clues gave the words "Overlord" "Utah" "Omaha" "Mulberry" "Neptune"—all code-words to be used during the Allied invasion

assault sector. Lieutenant Honour and his crew were not unaware of the significance of this particular date. On another 4th June, four years earlier, at a place less than 200 miles away, the last of 338,000 British troops had been evacuated from Dunkirk. On the X23 it was a tense, proud moment for the five specially chosen men. They were the British vanguard: the men of the X23 were leading the way back to France for the thousands of their fellow countrymen who would soon follow.

These five men, crouching in the tiny all-purpose cabin of the X23, did not look like Englishmen. Every precaution had been taken to hide their identities and their mission. They wore the rough clothing of French fishermen and carried ingeniously falsified papers that would have passed the scrutiny of the most suspicious German sentry.

The X23's mission was a hazardous one. Twenty minutes before H-Hour, the midget submarine and her sister ship the X20—some twenty miles farther down the coast opposite the little village of Hamel—would boldly come to the surface to act as navigational markers, clearly defining the extreme limits of the British-Canadian assault zone; three beaches that had been given the code names of Sword, Juno and Gold.

The plan they were to follow was involved and elaborate. An automatic radio beacon capable of sending out a continuous signal was to be switched on the moment they surfaced. At the same time sonar apparatus would automatically broadcast sound waves through the water which could be picked up by underwater listening devices. The fleet carrying British and Canadian troops would home in on either one or both of the signals.

Each midget also carried an eighteen-foot telescopic mast to which was attached a small but powerful searchlight that could send out a flashing beam capable of being seen more than five miles away. If the light showed green, it would mean that the submarines were on target; if not, the light would be red.

As additional navigation aids, the plan called for each midget to

launch a moored rubber dinghy with a man in it and allow it to drift a certain distance towards the shore. The dinghies had been fitted with searchlights which would be operated by the crews. By taking bearings on the lights of the midgets and their drifting dinghies, the approaching ships would be able to pinpoint the exact positions of the three assault beaches.

At the periscope Lyne took a series of bearings. He quickly identified several landmarks: the Ouistreham lighthouse, the town church and the spires of two others in the villages of Langrune and St. Aubin a few miles away. Honour had been right. They were almost "bang on the target"—barely three-quarters of a mile from their plotted position.

Honour was relieved to be as close as this. It had been a long, harrowing trip. They had covered the ninety miles from Portsmouth in a little under two days and much of that time they had travelled through minefields. Now they would get into position and then drop to the bottom. "Operation Gambit" started well.

Honour took one last look through the periscope at the Germans working on the beaches. All hell would break loose on those beaches by this time tomorrow, he thought. "Down periscope," he ordered.

Submerged, and out of radio communication with their base, Honour and the crew of the X23 did not know that the invasion had been postponed.

At 1 a.m., 5th June, X23 came to the surface. Honour quickly undid the hatch. Climbing up into the little conning tower, Honour and another man erected the antennæ. Down below, Lieutenant James Hodges flicked the dial on the radio to 1,850 kilocycles and cupped his earphones with his hands. He hadn't long to wait. Very faintly he picked up their call sign . . . PADFOOT . . . PADFOOT . . . PADFOOT. As he heard the one-word message that followed, he looked up in disbelief. Pressing his hands more firmly over the earphones his listened again. But there was no mistake. He told the others. Nobody said anything. Glumly they looked at one another: ahead lay another full day under water.

AND NOW, as the hours slipped by and the weather steadily worsened, the greatest airborne and amphibious force ever assembled waited for General Eisenhower's decision. Would he confirm 6th June as D-Day? Or would he be compelled because of Channel weather—the worst for twenty years—to postpone the invasion once again?

In the fading light of the afternoon the supreme commander occasionally came to the door of his caravan and gazed up through the wind-swept tree-tops at the blanket of clouds that covered the sky—a solitary figure, shoulders slightly hunched, hands rammed deep into his pockets.

Shortly before 9.30 that night of 4th June, Eisenhower's senior commanders and their chiefs of staff gathered in the library of Southwick House. Standing about the room in little groups, the staff officers talked quietly. Near the fire-place Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Walter Bedell Smith, conversed with the pipe-smoking Deputy Supreme Commander, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder. Seated to one side was the fiery Allied Naval Commander, Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay and, close by, the Allied Air Commander, Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory. Only one officer was dressed informally, General Smith recalls. General Montgomery, who would be in charge of the D-Day assault, wore his usual corduroy slacks and roll-neck sweater. These were the men who would translate the order for the attack when Eisenhower gave the word. Now, they and their chiefs of staff—altogether there were twelve senior officers in the room—waited for the arrival of the supreme commander and the decisive conference due to begin at 9.30. At that time they would hear the latest forecasts of the meteorologists.

At exactly 9.30 the door opened and Eisenhower, neat in his dark green battledress, strode in. There was just the faintest flicker of the Eisenhower grin as he greeted his old friends, but the cloud of worry quickly returned to his face as he opened the conference. There was no need for a preamble: everybody knew the seriousness

of the decision that had to be made. Almost immediately the three senior Overlord meteorologists, led by their chief, Group Captain J. N. Stagg of the RAF, came into the room.

There was a hushed silence as Stagg opened the briefing. Quickly he sketched the weather picture of the previous twenty-four hours and then he said quietly, "Gentlemen, there have been some rapid and unexpected developments in the situation. . . ." All eyes were on Stagg now, as he presented the anxious-faced Eisenhower and his commanders with a slender ray of hope.

A new weather front had been spotted which, he said, would move up the Channel within the next few hours and cause a gradual clearing over the assault areas. These improving conditions would last throughout the next day and continue up to the morning of 6th June. After that the weather would begin to deteriorate again. During this promised period of improved weather, the winds would drop appreciably and the skies would clear—enough at least for bombers to operate on the night of the 5th and throughout the morning of the 6th. By noon the cloud layer would thicken and the skies would become overcast again. In short, Eisenhower was being told that a barely tolerable period of fair conditions, far below the minimal requirements, would prevail *for just a little more than twenty-four hours.*

For the next fifteen minutes Eisenhower and his commanders deliberated. The urgency of making a decision was stressed by Admiral Ramsay. The American task force for the beaches code-named Omaha and Utah, under the command of Rear-Admiral A. G. Kirk, would have to get the order within half an hour if Overlord was to take place on Tuesday.

Eisenhower now polled his commanders one by one. General Smith thought that the attack should go in on the 6th—it was a gamble, but one that should be taken. Tedder and Leigh-Mallory were both fearful that even the predicted cloud cover would prove too much for the air forces to operate effectively. It might mean that the assault would take place without adequate air support. They

thought it was going to be "chancy." Montgomery stuck to the decision that he had made the night before when the 5th June D-Day had been postponed. "I would say—go," he said.

It was now up to Eisenhower. The moment had come when only he could make the decision. There was a long silence as he weighed all the possibilities. As General Smith watched he was struck by the "isolation and loneliness" of the supreme commander as he sat, hands clasped before him, looking down at the table. The minutes ticked by. Some say two minutes passed, others as long as five. Then Eisenhower, his face strained, looked up and announced his decision. Slowly he said, "I am quite positive we must give the order. . . . I don't like it, but there it is. . . . I don't see how we can do anything else."

Eisenhower stood up. He looked tired, but some of the tension had left his face. Tuesday, 6th June, would be D-Day.

AS THE night closed in, the invasion forces all over England continued to wait. Keyed up by months of training, they were ready to go, and the postponement had made them jittery. It was now about eighteen hours since the stand-down, and each hour had taken its toll of the patience and readiness of the troops. They did not know that D-Day was now barely twenty-six hours away; it was still much too early for the news to filter down. And so, on this stormy Sunday night, men waited—in loneliness, anxiety and secret fear—for something, anything, to happen.

They did precisely what the world expects men to do under such circumstances: they thought of their families, their wives, their children, their sweethearts. And everybody talked about the fighting that lay ahead. What would the beaches really be like? Would the landings be as tough as everybody seemed to think? Nobody could visualize D-Day, but each man prepared for it in his own way.

A few men, nerveless and cool, slept soundly. At a British 50th Division embarkation area one such man was Company Sergeant-

Major Stanley Hollis. The coming attack didn't worry Hollis too much; he had a good idea what to expect. He had been evacuated from Dunkirk, had fought with the 8th Army in North Africa and had landed on the beaches of Sicily. Now he was looking forward to the invasion: he wanted to get back to France to kill some more Germans.

It was a personal matter with Hollis. He'd been a dispatch rider at the time of Dunkirk, and in the town of Lille during the retreat he had seen a sight which he'd never forgotten. Cut off from his unit, Hollis had taken a wrong turning in a part of the town that the Germans had apparently just passed through. He found himself in a cul-de-sac filled with the still-warm bodies of over a hundred French men, women and children. They had been machine-gunned. Embedded in the wall behind the bodies and littering the ground were hundreds of spent bullets. From that moment Stan Hollis had become a superb hunter of the enemy. His score was now ninety. At D-Day's end, he would notch his Sten gun with his 102nd kill.

The troops who suffered most during the waiting period were the men in the recalled convoys. All day they had ridden out the storm in the Channel. Now, waterlogged and weary, they glumly lined the rails as the last of the straggling convoys dropped their anchors. By 11 p.m. all the ships were back.

Outside Plymouth harbour, Commander Hoffman of the *Corry* stood on his bridge looking at the long lines of dark shadows, blacked-out landing ships of every size and description. It was cold and Hoffman was weary. On their return to port, they had learned for the first time the reason for the postponement. Now they had been warned to stand to once again.

Below decks the news spread quickly. Radioman Third Class Bennie Glisson heard it as he prepared to go on watch. He made his way to the mess, and when he got there he found more than a dozen men having dinner—tonight it was turkey with all the trimmings. Everybody seemed depressed. "You guys," he said, "act like you're eating your last meal." Bennie was nearly right. At least half of

those present would go down with the *Corry* a few minutes before H-Hour on D-Day.

At midnight, cutters and naval destroyers began the huge job of reassembling the convoys. This time there would be no turning back.

MONDAY, 5th June, 1944: in the early morning light the beaches of Normandy were shrouded in mist. The intermittent rain of the previous day had become a steady drizzle, soaking everything.

For four years the people of Normandy had lived with the Germans on their soil. This bondage had meant different things to different people. In the three major towns—Le Havre, Cherbourg and Caen—the Occupation was a harsh and constant fact of life. Here were the headquarters of the Gestapo and the SS. Here were the reminders of war—the nightly round-ups of hostages, the never-ending reprisals against the underground, the welcome but fearful Allied bombing attacks.

Beyond the big towns—particularly between Caen and Cherbourg—lay the hedgerow country: the little fields bordered by great mounds of earth, each topped with thick bushes and saplings that had been used as natural fortifications since the days of the Romans. Here and there stood small towns and villages like miniature citadels. To most of the world their names were unknown—Vierville . . . Colleville . . . La Madeleine . . . Ste.-Mère-Eglise . . . Chef-du-Pont . . . Ste.-Marie-du-Mont . . . Arromanches . . . Luc—and all the others.

Here, in the sparsely populated countryside, the Occupation had a different meaning. Caught up in a kind of pastoral backwash of the war, there was nothing for the Norman peasants to do but adjust themselves to the situation. They lived from day to day, hating the Nazis with typical Norman tenaciousness, stoically watching and waiting for the day of liberation.

In his mother's house on a hill overlooking the sleepy village of Vierville, a thirty-one-year-old lawyer, Michel Hardelay, stood at the living-room windows, his binoculars focused on a German

soldier riding a large farm-horse down the road to the seafront. On either side of his saddle hung several tin cans. Michel Hardelay knew it was exactly 6.15 a.m. Every morning it was the same. The German was never late: he always brought the morning coffee down to the Vierville exit at this time. The day had begun for the gun crews in the cliffside pillboxes and camouflaged bunkers at this end of the beach—a peaceful-looking, gently curving strip of sand that later would be known to the world as Omaha Beach.

Hardelay had watched the ritual many times before. Every morning the trooper rode three kilometres, and it always struck him as amusing that the much-vaunted technical know-how of the Germans fell apart when it came to a simple job like supplying men in the field with morning coffee.

But Hardelay's was a bitter amusement. For some months he had watched German troops and conscripted labour battalions digging, burrowing and tunnelling all along the bluffs. He had watched as, with methodical thoroughness, they had demolished the line of pretty pink, white and red summer cottages and villas below the bluffs along the seafront. Now, out of ninety buildings, only seven remained. The others had been destroyed, not only to give the gunners clear arcs of fire, but because the Germans wanted the wood to panel their bunkers. Of the seven houses still standing, one of them, the largest—an all-the-year-round house, built of stone—belonged to Hardelay. A few days before, he had been officially told by the local commandant that his house would be destroyed. The Germans had decided that they needed the bricks and stone.

Hardelay wondered if perhaps somebody, somewhere, wouldn't countermand the decision. In some matters, the Germans were often unpredictable. He'd know for certain within the next twenty-four hours: he had been told the house would come down tomorrow—Tuesday, 6th June.

Farther down the beach, near the Colleville exit, forty-year-old Fernand Broeckx was doing what he did every morning: he sat in his dripping barn, spectacles askew, head tucked down by the

udders of a cow, directing a thin stream of milk into a pail. His farm, lying alongside a narrow cart-track, topped a slight rise barely half a mile from the sea. He hadn't been down that road or on to the beach for a long time—not since the Germans closed it off.

He had been farming in Normandy for five years. In the First World War, Broeckx, a Belgian, had seen his home destroyed. He had never forgotten it. In 1939, when the Second World War began, he promptly gave up his job in an office and moved his wife and daughter to Normandy, where they would be safe.

Fifteen miles away, in the cathedral town of Bayeux, his pretty nineteen-year-old daughter, Anne-Marie, prepared to set out for the kindergarten school where she taught. She was looking forward to the end of the day, for then the summer holidays began. She planned to spend her holidays on the farm, and intended to cycle home tomorrow. There was no way for her to know that tomorrow a tall, lean American from Rhode Island whom she had never met would land on the beach almost in line with her father's farm. Nor was there any way for her to know that one day she would marry him.

All along the Normandy coast people went about their usual daily chores. The farmers worked in the fields, tended their orchards, herded their white-and-liver-coloured cows. In the little villages and towns the shops opened. For everyone it was just a routine day of Occupation.

In the little hamlet of La Madeleine, behind the dunes and the wide expanse of sand that would soon be known as Utah Beach, Paul Gazengel opened up his tiny shop and café as usual, although there was almost no business.

There had been a time when Gazengel had made a fair living. But now the entire coastal area was sealed off. The families living just behind the sea-shore and all along this side of the Cherbourg peninsula had been moved out. Only those who owned farms had been permitted to remain. The café owner's livelihood now depended on seven families that remained in La Madeleine and a few German troops in the vicinity whom he was forced to serve.

Gazengel would have liked to move away. As he sat in his café waiting for the first customer, he did not know that within twenty-four hours he would be making a trip. He and all the other men in the village would be rounded up and sent to England for questioning.

THE DAY was quiet and uneventful for the Germans, too. Nothing was happening and nothing was expected to happen: the weather was so bad that in Paris, at the Luftwaffe's headquarters in the Luxembourg Palace, Colonel Professor Walter Stöbe, the chief meteorologist, told staff officers that they could relax. He doubted whether Allied planes would even be operational that day. Anti-aircraft crews were promptly ordered to stand down.

Next, Stöbe telephoned von Rundstedt's headquarters in St.-Germain. Von Rundstedt slept late that day as usual, and it was almost noon before he met and conferred with his chief of staff and approved OB West's "Estimate of Allied Intentions" so that it could be forwarded to Hitler's headquarters, OKW. The estimate was another typical wrong guess. It read: "The systematic and distinct increase of air attacks indicates that the enemy has reached a high degree of readiness. The probable invasion front still remains the sector from the Schelde (in Holland) to Normandy . . . and it is not impossible that the north front of Brittany might be included . . . (but) . . . still not clear where the enemy will invade within this total area. Concentrated air attacks on the coast defences between Dunkirk and Dieppe may mean that the main Allied invasion effort will be made there . . . (but) . . . imminence of invasion is not recognizable. . . ."

With this vague estimate out of the way—an estimate that covered almost 800 miles of the invasion coast—von Rundstedt and his son, a young lieutenant, set out for the field-marshal's favourite restaurant, the *Coq Hardi* at Bougival near by. It was a little after one o'clock; D-Day was twelve hours away.

All along the chain of German command the continuing bad weather acted soothingly. The various headquarters were quite

confident that there would be no attack in the immediate future. Their reasoning was based on carefully assessed weather evaluations that had been made of the Allied landings in North Africa, Italy and Sicily. In each case conditions had varied, but meteorologists had noted that the Allies never attempted a landing unless the prospects of favourable weather were almost certain—particularly for the covering air operations. To the methodical German mind there was no deviation from this rule: the weather had to be just right or the Allies wouldn't attack. And the weather wasn't just right.

At Army Group B headquarters in La Roche-Guyon the work went on as though Rommel were still there; but the Chief of Staff, Major-General Dr. Hans Speidel, thought it was quiet enough to plan a little dinner party. He had invited several guests, among them Ernst Juenger, the philosopher and author. The intellectual Speidel was looking forward to the dinner. He hoped that they'd discuss his favourite subject: French literature. There was something else to be discussed: a twenty-page manuscript that Juenger had drafted and secretly passed on to Rommel and Speidel. Both of them fervently believed in the document: it outlined a plan for bringing about peace—after Hitler had been either tried by a German court or assassinated. "We can really have a night discussing things," Speidel had told Juenger.

In St.-Lô, at the headquarters of the 84th Corps, Major Friedrech Hayn, the intelligence officer, was arranging a party for the Commander, General Erich Marcks. His birthday was on 6th June.

They were holding the surprise birthday party at midnight because Marcks had to leave for Rennes in Brittany at daybreak. He and all the other senior commanders in Normandy were to take part in a big map exercise that was to begin early on Tuesday morning. Everyone thought the *Kriegsspiel* would be interesting: it was a theoretical "invasion" which was supposed to take place in Normandy.

The *Kriegsspiel* worried the 7th Army's Chief of Staff, Brigadier-General Max Pemsel. It was bad enough that his senior commanders in Normandy and the Cherbourg peninsula would be away from

their commands all at the same time. But it might be dangerous if they were away overnight. Rennes was a long way off for most of them, and Pemsel was afraid that some might be planning to leave the front before dawn.

He believed that if an invasion ever came in Normandy the attack would be launched at first light. He decided to warn all those due to participate in the exercise. The order he sent out by teleprinter read: "Commanding generals and others scheduled to attend the *Kriegsspiel* are reminded not to leave for Rennes before dawn on 6th June." But it was too late. Some had already left.

One by one, senior officers had left the front on the very eve of the battle. All had reasons, but it was almost as though a capricious fate had manipulated their departure. Rommel was away in Germany. So was Army Group B's operations officer, Colonel Hans Georg von Tempelhoff. Major-General Heinz Hellmich, commanding the 243rd Division, holding one side of the Cherbourg peninsula, departed for Rennes. So did Major-General Karl von Schlieben of the 709th Division. Brigadier-General Wilhelm Falley, of the tough 91st Air Landing Division that had just moved into Normandy, prepared to go. Colonel Wilhelm Meyer-Detring, von Rundstedt's intelligence officer, was on leave. The chief of staff of one division was off hunting with his French mistress and could not be reached.*

At this point, with the officers in charge of beach-head defences dispersed all over Europe, the German High Command decided to

*After D-Day the coincidence of these multiple departures from the invasion front struck the Germans so forcibly that there was actually talk of an investigation to find out whether the British Secret Service could possibly have had anything to do with it!

The fact is that Hitler himself was no better prepared for the great day than were his generals. The Fuehrer was at his Berchtesgaden retreat in Bavaria. His naval *aide*, Admiral Karl Jesko von Puttkamer, remembers that Hitler got up late, held his usual military conference at noon and then had lunch at 4 p.m. Besides his mistress, Eva Braun, there were a number of Nazi dignitaries and their wives. After lunch the group adjourned to the garden, where the Fuehrer sipped lime-blossom tea. He took a nap between six and seven, held another military conference at 11 p.m.; then, a little before midnight, the ladies were called back. To the best of Puttkamer's recollection the group then had to listen to a couple of hours of Wagner, Lehár and Strauss.

transfer the Luftwaffe's last remaining fighter squadrons in France far out of range of the Normandy beaches. The pilots were aghast.

The principal reason for the withdrawal was that the squadrons were needed to defend the Reich, which for months had been coming under increasingly heavy round-the-clock Allied bombing attack. Under the circumstances it just did not seem reasonable to the High Command to leave these vital planes on exposed airfields in France where they were being destroyed by Allied fighters and bombers. Hitler had promised his generals that 1,000 Luftwaffe planes would bomb the beaches on the day of invasion. Now that was patently impossible. On 4th June there were only 183 day fighter planes in the whole of France; about 160 were considered serviceable. Of the 160, one wing of 124—the 26th Fighter Wing—was being moved back from the coast that very afternoon.

At the headquarters of the 26th at Lille, in the zone of the 15th Army, Colonel Josef "Pips" Priller, one of the Luftwaffe's top aces (he had shot down ninety-six planes) stood on the airfield and fumed. Priller had a reputation for telling off generals, and now he telephoned his group commander.

"This is mad!" Priller yelled. "If we're expecting an invasion, the squadrons should be moved up, not back! And what happens if the attack comes during the transfer? My supplies can't reach the new bases until tomorrow or maybe the day after. You're all crazy!"

"Listen, Priller," said the group commander. "The invasion is out of the question. The weather is much too bad." Priller slammed down the receiver. On the airfield were only two planes left—his and one belonging to Sergeant Heinz Wodarczyk.

"What can we do?" he said to Wodarczyk. "If the invasion comes, they'll probably expect us to hold it off all by ourselves. So we might as well start getting drunk now."

OF ALL THE MILLIONS who watched and waited throughout France less than a dozen men and women actually knew that the invasion was imminent. They went about their affairs calmly and

casually as usual. Being calm and casual was part of their business: they were the leaders of the French underground.

This great, secret Resistance army of men and women had been fighting a silent war for more than four years—a war that was often unspectacular, but always hazardous. Thousands had been executed, thousands more had died in concentration camps. But now, although the rank and file didn't know it yet, the day for which they'd been fighting was close at hand.

In the previous days the underground's high command had picked up hundreds of coded messages which had been broadcast by the BBC. A few of these had been alerts that the invasion might come at any moment. One of these messages had been the first phrase of the Verlaine poem, *"Chanson d'Automne"*—the same alert that Lieutenant-Colonel Meyer's men at the German 15th Army headquarters had intercepted on 1st June. Canaris had been right.

Now, like Meyer, but much more excited, the underground leaders waited for the second phrase of the poem. For the underground at large, however, the real tip-off would come when the Allies ordered the pre-arranged sabotage plans to go into effect.

TWO MESSAGES would trigger the attacks. One, *"It is hot in Suez,"* would put into effect the "Green Plan"—the sabotaging of railway tracks and equipment. The other, *"The dice are on the table,"* would call for the "Red Plan"—the cutting of telephone lines and cables. All regional, area and sector leaders had been warned to listen for these two messages.

On this Monday evening, the eve of D-Day, one message was broadcast by the BBC at 6.30 p.m. The announcer said, *"The dice are on the table. . . . Napoleon's hat is in the ring. . . . The arrow will not pass."* The other came minutes later.

Everywhere now, Resistance groups were quietly told the news by their immediate leaders. Each unit had its own plan and knew exactly what had to be done. Albert Augé, the stationmaster at Caen, and his men were to destroy water pumps in the yards,

smash the steam injectors on locomotives. André Farine, a café owner from Lieu Fontaine near Isigny, had the job of strangling Normandy's communications: his forty-man team would cut the massive telephone cable feeding out of Cherbourg. Yves Gresselin, a Cherbourg grocer, had one of the toughest jobs of all: his men were to dynamite a network of railway lines between Cherbourg, St.-Lô and Paris. Everywhere along the invasion coast, from Brittany to the Belgian border, men prepared.

In the seaside resort town of Grandcamp near the mouth of the Vire, and almost midway between Omaha and Utah beaches, sector chief Jean Marion had vital information for London. He wondered how he'd get it there—and if he still had time.

Early in the afternoon his men had reported the arrival of a new anti-aircraft battery group in the area.

Although Marion did not know it, the guns covered the precise route the planes and gliders of the 82nd and 101st paratroopers would take within a few hours.

OFF THE FRENCH coast just before 9 p.m. a dozen small ships appeared. They moved quietly along the horizon, so close that their crews could clearly see the houses of Normandy. Unnoticed they finished their job and then moved back. They were British mine-sweepers—the vanguard of the mightest fleet ever assembled.

For now, back in the Channel, ploughing through the choppy grey waters, a phalanx of ships bore down on Hitler's Europe—the might and fury of the Free World unleashed at last. They came, rank after relentless rank, ten lanes wide, twenty miles across, 2,727 ships of every description. There were fast new attack transports, slow rust-scarred freighters, small ocean liners, Channel steamers, hospital ships, weather-beaten tankers, coasters and swarms of fussing tugs. There were endless columns of shallow-draught landing-ships—great wallowing vessels, some of them almost 350 feet long. Many of these and the other heavier transports carried smaller landing-craft for the actual beach assault: more than 2,500

of them. Ahead of the convoys were processions of mine-sweepers, cutters, buoy layers and motor-launches. Barrage balloons flew above the ships. Squadrons of fighter planes weaved below the clouds. And surrounding this fantastic cavalcade of ships packed with men, guns, tanks, motor vehicles and supplies was a formidable array of more than 700 warships.

There was the heavy cruiser USS *Augusta*, Rear-Admiral Kirk's flagship, leading the American task force—twenty-one convoys bound for Omaha and Utah beaches. Near by, steaming majestically with all their battle flags flying, were the battleships: HMS *Ramillies* and *Warspite*; USS *Texas*, *Arkansas* and *Nevada*.

Leading the thirty-eight British and Canadian convoys bound for Sword, Juno and Gold beaches was the cruiser HMS *Scylla*, the flagship of Rear-Admiral Sir Philip Vian, who had helped to track down the great German battleship *Bismarck*. And close by was one of Britain's most famous cruisers—HMS *Ajax*, one of a trio which had hounded the *Graf Spee* to her doom in Montevideo harbour. There were many famous cruisers: HMS *Enterprise* and *Black Prince*, the USS *Tuscaloosa* and *Quincy*, France's *Georges Leygues*—twenty-two in all.

In lines, along the edges of the convoys, were a variety of ships: sloops, corvettes, powerful gunboats—like the Dutch *Soemba*—anti-submarine craft, fast patrol boats and everywhere sleek destroyers. Besides the scores of British and American destroyer units there were Canada's *Qu'appelle*, *Saskatchewan* and *Restigouche*; Free Norway's *Svenner*; and even a contribution from the Free Polish Forces—the *Piorun*.

Slowly, ponderously, this great armada moved across the Channel. It followed a staggered minute-by-minute traffic pattern of a kind never attempted before. Ships poured out of British ports and, moving down the coasts in two-convoy lanes, converged on the assembly area south of the Isle of Wight. There they sorted themselves out and joined with the forces heading for one of the five beaches to which they had been assigned. Out of the assembly area,

which was promptly nicknamed "Piccadilly Circus," the convoys headed for France along buoy-marked lanes.

For the troops it was good to be on the way at last—despite the discomforts and the dangers ahead. Men were still tense, but some of the strain had lifted. Now, everybody simply wanted to get the job over and done with.

On the landing-ships and transports men wrote last-minute letters, played cards and saw their padres.

Before they had been in the Channel very long, many men who had spent hours worrying about their chances of survival couldn't wait to reach the beaches. Sea-sickness had struck through the fifty-nine convoys like a plague, especially in the rolling and heaving landing-craft. Each man had been supplied with anti-seasickness pills, also an article of equipment which was listed in the loading sheets with typical army thoroughness as "Bag, Vomit, One."

This was army efficiency at its best—but it still wasn't enough. One sergeant recalls, "The puke bags were full, tin hats were full; the fire buckets were emptied of sand and filled."

Some men tried to read—books that were odd and curious, books which, for the most part, had nothing to do with the situation that these men now found themselves in. American Chaplain Lawrence Deery on the transport HMS *Empire Anvil* was amazed to see a British naval officer reading Horace's *Odes* in Latin. Deery himself, who would land on Omaha Beach in the first wave with the 16th Infantry Regiment, spent the evening reading Symonds's *Life of Michelangelo*. Near by on a landing-craft Captain James Douglas Gillan, a Canadian, opened a volume which made sense to everybody that night. To quiet his own nerves and those of a brother officer, he read aloud, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. . . ."

IT WAS A little after 10.15 p.m. when Lieutenant-Colonel Meyer, counter-intelligence chief of the German 15th Army, rushed out of his office. In his hand was probably the most important message the

Germans had intercepted throughout the whole of the war. Meyer now knew that the invasion would take place within forty-eight hours. With this information the Allies could be thrown back into the sea. The message picked up from a BBC broadcast to the French underground was the second phrase of the Verlaine poem: "*Blessent mon cœur d'une langueur monotone.*"

Meyer burst into the dining-room where General Hans von Salmuth was playing bridge with his chief of staff and two others. "General!" Meyer said breathlessly. "The message, the second part . . . it's here!" Von Salmuth thought for a moment, then gave the order to put the 15th Army on full alert.

All over England the Allied airborne armies boarded their planes and gliders. The pathfinder planes had already left. Over at the 101st Airborne Division's headquarters at Newbury, General Eisenhower, with a small group of officers and four correspondents, watched the first planes get into position for take-off. He had spent more than an hour talking to the men. He was more worried about the airborne operation than any other phase of the assault. Some of his commanders were convinced that the airborne assault might result in more than seventy-five per cent casualties.

Eisenhower stood watching now as the planes trundled down the runways and lifted slowly into the air. One by one they followed each other into the darkness. Above the field they circled as they assembled into formation.

Eisenhower, his hands deep in his pockets, gazed up into the night sky. As the huge formation of planes roared once more over the field and headed towards France, a war correspondent looked at the supreme commander. Eisenhower's eyes were filled with tears.

Minutes later, over the Channel, the men of the invasion fleet heard the roar of the planes, too. It grew louder by the second as wave after wave passed overhead. The formations took more than an hour to pass. Then the thunder of their engines began to fade. On the decks of the ships the men gazed up into the darkness. Nobody could say a word. And then, as the last formation flew over,

an amber light blinked down through the clouds on to the fleet below. Slowly it flashed out in Morse code three dots and a dash: V for Victory.

SOON AFTER MIDNIGHT, on 6th June 1944, Major Werner Pluskat, of the German 352nd Division, was awakened by an ominous roaring that filled the sky. Pluskat was in his headquarters at Etreham, four miles inland from the Normandy coast. Dazed, only half awake and still in his underwear, he grabbed the phone and spoke to Lieutenant-Colonel Ocker, his regimental commander.

"What's happening?" he yelled into the phone. The racket of planes and gunfire was increasing, and every instinct told Pluskat that this was more than a raid.

Lieutenant-Colonel Ocker seemed annoyed at Pluskat's phone call. "My dear Pluskat," he said icily, "we don't know yet what's going on. We'll let you know when we find out." There was a sharp click as he hung up. The reply didn't satisfy Pluskat. For the past twenty minutes planes had been droning through the flare-studded sky, bombing the coast to the east and west. Pluskat's coastal area in the middle was uncomfortably quiet. From his headquarters he commanded four batteries—twenty guns in all—which covered half the area that was soon to be known as Omaha Beach.

Nervously, Pluskat phoned Divisional Headquarters and spoke to the 352nd's intelligence officer, Major Block. "Probably just another bombing raid, Pluskat," Block told him. "It's not clear yet."

Feeling a little foolish, Pluskat hung up. He wondered if he'd been too impetuous. After all, there had been no alarm. In fact, Pluskat recalls, after weeks of on-again, off-again alerts, this was one of the few nights when his men had been ordered to stand down.

Pluskat was wide awake now, too uneasy for sleep. He sat on the edge of his bed for some time. At his feet, Harras, his Alsatian, lay quietly. In the far distance Pluskat could still hear the droning of planes.

Suddenly the field telephone rang. Pluskat grabbed it quickly.

"Paratroopers are reported on the peninsula," said the calm voice of Colonel Ocker. "Alert your men and get down to the coast at once. This could be the invasion."

Minutes later Pluskat and his two ordnance officers, Captain Ludz Wilkening and Lieutenant Fritz Theen, started for their advance headquarters, an observation bunker built into the cliffs near the village of Ste.-Honorine. Pluskat recalls that he had one big worry: his batteries had only enough ammunition for twenty-four hours.

At Ste.-Honorine, Pluskat and his two officers climbed a narrow track behind the cliffs leading to the hidden headquarters. The path was marked by strands of barbed wire. It was the only entrance to the post and there were minefields on either side. Almost at the top of the cliff the major dropped into a slit trench, went down a flight of concrete steps, followed a twisting tunnel, and finally entered a large, single-roomed bunker manned by three men.

Quickly Pluskat positioned himself before the high-powered artillery glasses which stood on a pedestal opposite one of the bunker's two narrow apertures. The observation post couldn't have been better sited: it was more than a hundred feet above the shore and almost directly in the centre of what was soon to be the Normandy beach-head. On a clear day from this vantage-point, a spotter could see all the way from the tip of the Cherbourg peninsula off to the west to Le Havre on the east.

Even now, in the moonlight, Pluskat had a remarkable view. Slowly moving the glasses from left to right, he scanned the bay. There was nothing unusual to be seen.

Eventually he stood back. "There's nothing out there," he said to Lieutenant Theen, when he phoned regimental headquarters. But Pluskat was still uneasy. "I'm going to stay here," he told Ocker. "Perhaps it's a false alarm, but something could still happen."

By now vague and contradictory reports were filtering into the German 7th Army command posts all over Normandy, and everywhere officers were trying to assess them. They had little to go on—

shadowy figures seen here, shots fired there, a parachute hanging from a tree somewhere else. Clues to something—but what? How many men had landed—two or 200? Were they bomber crews that had baled out? Was this a series of French Resistance attacks? Nobody was sure—and on the basis of information at hand nobody at either 7th or 15th Army Headquarters was willing to raise the alarm—an alarm that later might be proved wrong.

And so the minutes ticked by.

ALTHOUGH the Germans didn't recognize it, the appearance of paratroopers on the Cherbourg peninsula was the clue to the fact that D-Day had begun. These paratroopers—120 of them—were American pathfinders.

They ran into difficulties from the very beginning. German flak units had filled the sky with weaving patterns of glowing tracer bullets and deadly bursts of shrapnel. The flak was so intense that the planes were forced off course.

Only thirty-eight of the 120 pathfinders landed on their targets. The remainder came down miles off. They dropped into fields, gardens, streams and swamps. They crashed into trees, hedgerows and on to roof-tops.

All over the area pathfinders tried to get their bearings. Moving silently from hedgerow to hedgerow, bulky with guns, mines, lights, radar sets and fluorescent panels, they set out for rendezvous points. They had barely one hour to mark the drop zones for the full-scale American parachute assault.

Fifty miles away, at the eastern end of the Normandy battlefield, six plane-loads of British pathfinders, men of the 22nd Independent Parachute Company, and six RAF bombers towing gliders swept in over the coast. Ahead of them the sky stormed with vicious flak fire, and ghostly chandeliers of flares hung everywhere when the jumps began. In the little village of Ranville, a few miles from Caen, eleven-year-old Alain Doix saw the flares too. Shaking his grandmother, Madame Mathilde Doix, who was sleeping with him, Alain

said excitedly: "Wake up. Wake up, Grandmamma. I think something is happening."

Just then Alain's father, René Doix, rushed into the room. "Get dressed quickly," he urged them, "I think it's a heavy raid." From the window, father and son could see the planes coming in over the fields, but as he watched René realized that these planes made no sound. Suddenly it dawned on him what they were. "My God," he exclaimed, "these aren't planes! They're gliders!"

Like huge bats, the six gliders, each carrying thirty men, swooped silently down, headed for the two heavily guarded bridges that crossed the Caen canal and the Orne river just above Ranville. The bridges were needed to expand the invasion bridge-head, and to protect the seaborne forces against counter-attack on their left flank. They had to be captured intact before the German guards could set off demolitions. To effect this the British commanders had a bold and dangerous scheme. The men, arms linked, held their breath as their gliders rustled softly down through the moonlit night about to crash-land on the very approaches to the bridges.

Private Bill Gray, a Bren gunner of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, in one of three gliders heading for the Caen canal bridge, closed his eyes and braced himself for the crash. It was eerily silent. There was no firing from the ground. The only sound came from the big machine, sighing gently through the air. Gray remembers his platoon leader, Lieutenant H. D. ("Danny") Brotheridge, saying, "Here we go, chaps." Then there was a splintering, rending crash. The undercarriage ripped off, splinters showered back from the smashed cockpit canopy and, swaying from side to side like a truck out of control, the glider screeched across the ground before crashing to a halt, as Gray recalls, "with its nose buried in barbed wire and almost on the bridge."

Someone yelled "Come on, lads!" and men came scrambling out, some piling through the door, others tumbling down from the stove-in nose. Almost at the same time and only yards away, the other two gliders skidded to a crashing halt and out of them poured

the remainder of the assault force. Now everybody stormed the bridge. There was bedlam. The Germans were shocked and disorganized. Grenades came hurtling into their dug-outs and communication trenches. Some Germans who were actually asleep in gun-pits woke to the blinding crash of explosions and found themselves gazing into the business ends of Sten guns.

Stunned by the swiftness of the assault, the Germans were overwhelmed. Ironically, they couldn't have destroyed the crossings even if they had had the time. Swarming over the bridges, the sappers found that although demolition preparations had been completed, explosive charges had never been placed in position. They were found in a near-by hut.

From a captured pillbox Lance-Corporal Edward Tappenden, from Chatham, radioed the success signal, over and over: "Ham and Jam. . . . Ham and Jam. . . ." D-Day's first battle was finished. It had lasted barely fifteen minutes.

Elsewhere the majority of the sixty British paratroop pathfinders who jumped into the area to mark drop zones east of the Orne river were having trouble. Their drop was even more widely scattered and chaotic than that of their American comrades fifty miles away.

An unaccountable wind had sprung up, and some areas were obscured by patches of fog. The planes carrying the British pathfinder teams had run into curtains of flak fire. Their pilots instinctively took evasive action, with the result that targets were overshot or couldn't be found at all. One plane, flying very low, swept doggedly back and forth through intense anti-aircraft fire for fourteen hair-raising minutes before unloading. Of the ten men in another plane only four reached the ground safely. One of them, Private James Morrissey, of the 22nd Independent Parachute Company, watched with horror as the other six, suddenly caught by a heavy wind, sailed far off towards the flooded Dives Valley—an area the Germans had inundated as part of their defences. Morrissey never saw any of them again.

Two of the pathfinders plunged out of the night sky and dropped

squarely on the lawn before the headquarters of Lieutenant-General Josef Reichert, commanding officer of the German 711th. Reichert was playing cards when the planes roared over, and he and the other officers rushed out—just in time to see the two men land.

It would have been hard to tell who was the more astonished, the Germans or the pathfinders. The astounded Reichert could only blurt out, "Where have you come from?" to which one of the pathfinders, with all the aplomb of a man who had just crashed a cocktail party, replied, "Awfully sorry, but we simply landed here by accident."

Reichert hurried into his headquarters and picked up the phone. "Get me 15th Army Headquarters," he said. But even as he waited for the call to be put through, the drop-zone lights in both the British and American sectors began to flash on. Some of the pathfinders had found their zones.

In St.-Lô, at the headquarters of the 84th Corps, the next level of command below army headquarters, the staff had gathered in General Erich Marcks's room to honour him with a surprise birthday party. They had cake, candles and wine. Standing in a little group round their stern-faced, one-legged General (he'd lost a leg in Russia), the officers came to attention. Stiffly raising their glasses, they drank his health, blissfully unaware that as they did so thousands of British paratroopers were dropping on French soil.

For most of the paratroopers of the British air drop it was an experience they will never forget. Private Raymond Batten, of Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, a paratrooper of the 6th Airborne Division, landed in a tree. His parachute caught in the branches and he hung slowly swaying back and forth in his harness, fifteen feet from the ground. It was very still in the wood, and as Batten pulled out his knife to cut himself down he heard the abrupt stutter of a *Schmeisser* machine pistol near by. A minute later there was a rustling of underbrush beneath him. Batten had lost his Sten gun and he hung there helplessly, not knowing whether it was a German or another paratrooper moving towards him. "Whoever it was came

and looked up at me," Batten recalls. "All I could do was to keep perfectly still and he, probably thinking I was dead as I hoped he would, went away."

Batten got down from the tree as fast as he could and made for the edge of the wood. On the way he found the body of a young paratrooper whose parachute had failed to open. Next, as he moved along a road, a man rushed past him shouting crazily, "They got my mate! They got my mate!" And finally, catching up with a group of paratroopers heading towards the assembly point, Batten found himself beside a man who seemed to be in a state of complete shock. He strode along, looking neither to his left or right, totally oblivious that the rifle which he gripped tightly in his right hand was bent almost double.

In many places that night men like Batten were shocked almost immediately into the harsh realities of war. As he was struggling to get out of his harness, Lance-Corporal Harold Tait of the 8th Parachute Battalion saw one of the Dakota transports hit by flak. The plane careered over his head like a searing comet and exploded with a tremendous noise about a mile away.

To a twenty-year-old County Durham private, Colin Powell of the 12th Parachute Battalion, miles from his drop zone, the first sound of war was a moaning in the night. He knelt down beside a badly wounded trooper, an Irishman, who softly pleaded with Powell to "finish me off, lad, please." Powell could not do it. He made the trooper as comfortable as he could and hurried off, promising to send back help.

One paratrooper crashed through the top of a greenhouse, "shattering glass all over the place, and making a hell of a lot of noise," but he was out and running before the glass had stopped falling. Another fell with pinpoint accuracy into a well. Hauling himself up hand-over-hand on his shroud lines, he set out for his assembly point as though nothing had happened. Private Godfrey Maddison, from Sunderland, crashed into a tangle of barbed wire fence. Both legs were twisted in the wire, and the weight of his

equipment—eighty-five pounds, including four ten-pound mortar shells—drove him so far into the wire that he was almost completely enmeshed. "I started to panic," he remembers. "I felt sure someone would take a pot-shot at me." For a few moments he did nothing but wait and listen. Then, satisfied that he'd escaped notice, Maddison began the slow and painful struggle to work himself free.

The most sinister enemy in these opening minutes of D-Day was not man but nature. Rommel's anti-paratroop precautions had paid off well: he had caused the Dives Valley to be flooded and the waters and swamps were death-traps. The number of men who died in these wastes will never be known. Survivors say that the marshes were intersected by a maze of ditches seven feet deep, four feet wide and bottomed with sticky mud. A man plunging into one of these ditches weighed down with guns and heavy equipment was helpless. Many drowned with dry land only a few yards away.

In the German observation bunker overlooking Omaha Beach, Major Werner Pluskat still watched. His uneasiness had not lessened. Soon after he reached the bunker, formation after formation of planes had thundered over the coast far off to the right; Pluskat thought there must have been hundreds. From the first moment he heard them, he had expected a call confirming his suspicions that the invasion was beginning. But the phone had remained silent. Now Pluskat heard something else—the slowly swelling roar of a great number of planes off to his left. Instinctively he looked out through his artillery glasses once again. The bay was completely empty.

In Ste.-Mère-Eglise, on Pluskat's left, the sound of bombing was close. Alexandre Reynaud, the mayor and town chemist, could feel the very ground shaking. It seemed to him that planes were attacking batteries only a few miles away. He herded his wife and three children into their makeshift air raid shelter—a heavily timbered passageway off the living-room. It was 1.10 a.m. Reynaud remembers the time, because just then there was a persistent urgent knocking

at the street door. Even before Reynaud reached the door he could see what the trouble was—M. Hairon's villa across the square was blazing fiercely.

Reynaud got the door open. The town's chief *pompier*, resplendent in his polished, shoulder-length brass helmet, stood before him. "I think it was hit by a stray incendiary," the fireman said. "Can you get the curfew lifted? We need help for the bucket brigade."

The mayor ran to the near-by German headquarters and got permission. Then he and the others went about banging on doors, calling for the inhabitants to help. Soon more than a hundred men and women in two long lines were passing buckets of water from hand to hand. Surrounding them were thirty German guards armed with rifles and *Schmeissers*.

In the midst of this confusion, Reynaud remembers, there came the droning of planes, coming straight for Ste.-Mère-Eglise. The sound came from the west—a steadily mounting roar, and with it the approaching racket of anti-aircraft fire as battery after battery across the peninsula picked up the formations. In the square of Ste.-Mère-Eglise everybody looked up, the burning house forgotten. Then the guns of the town began firing and the roaring was on top of them. The aircraft swept in, almost wing-tip to wing-tip, through a criss-crossing barrage of fire that hammered up from the ground. The planes' lights were on. They came in so low that people in the square instinctively ducked, and Reynaud remembers that the aircraft cast "great shadows on the ground and red lights seemed to be glowing inside them."

In wave after wave the formations flew over—the first planes of the biggest airborne operation ever attempted: 882 planes carrying 13,000 men of the US 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions, heading for six drop zones all within a few miles of Ste.-Mère-Eglise. The troopers tumbled out of their planes, stick after stick. Caught by a heavy wind a number of soldiers floated towards the inferno of the town's square.

Thousands of men were jumping for the drop zones north-west

of the town, and between Ste.-Mère-Eglise and the Utah invasion area. On them hung the fate of the whole Utah Beach operation.

As part of their anti-invasion measures Rommel's engineers had inundated so much ground that the Cherbourg peninsula was almost isolated from the rest of Normandy. By holding a few roads, bridges and causeways the Germans could bottle up an invading force and wipe it out. As a further defence measure they had flooded more than twelve square miles of low-lying land behind the beaches on the eastern coast. There was only one way an invader could force his way inland from Utah Beach: along five causeways running through the floods. And German guns controlled these.

In this heavily defended area Major-General Maxwell Taylor's 101st Airborne Division and General Matthew Ridgway's 82nd had been given the enormous task of carving out and holding an "airhead"—an island of defence running from Utah Beach to a point far to the west. They were to open the way for the US 4th Infantry Division landing on Utah Beach and to hold on until relieved. The area was twelve miles long and from four to seven miles wide. It was a huge area for what was left of 13,000 men, and they had to take it in less than five hours by paratroopers outnumbered three to one.

From the beginning the Americans worked against staggering odds. Their divisions were critically scattered. Only one regiment—the 505th—fell accurately. Sixty per cent of all equipment was lost, including most of the radios, mortars and ammunition. Worse still, many of the men were lost. The route of the planes was from west to east across the north-jutting peninsula, and it took just twelve minutes to cross the peninsula. Hundreds of men, heavily weighted with equipment, jumped too early and fell into the treacherous swamps. Many drowned—some in less than two feet of water. Others, jumping too late, fell into the darkness over what they thought was Normandy and were lost in the English Channel.

All over Normandy that night paratroopers and German soldiers met unexpectedly. One man, Major Lawrence Legere, talked his way out of trouble. Legere was leading a little group of men towards

the rendezvous point. Suddenly he was challenged in German. He knew no German but he was fluent in French. In the darkness of the field he posed as a young farmer and explained in French that he had been visiting his girl and was on his way home. As he talked, he was fingering a grenade. Still talking, he yanked the pin, threw the grenade and killed three Germans.

These were mad moments for everyone—particularly for the generals. They were without staffs, without communications, without men. Major-General Taylor found himself with several officers but only three other ranks.

"Never," he said, "have so few been commanded by so many."

THIS, then, was the beginning. The first invaders of D-Day, almost 18,000 troops, British, Canadian and American, were on the flanks of the Normandy battlefield. In between lay the five invasion beaches, and beyond the horizon, steadily approaching, only twelve miles out, was the first of the mighty 5,000-ship invasion fleet.

And still the Germans remained blind. There were many reasons. The weather, their lack of reconnaissance (only a few planes had been sent over the embarkation areas in the preceding weeks, and all had been shot down), their stubborn belief—deliberately fostered by the Allies—that the invasion *must* come at the Pas de Calais, all played a part. Even their radar stations failed them that night, confused by Allied planes flying along the coast dropping strips of tinfoil. Only one station had made a report. It saw only "normal Channel traffic."

More than two hours had elapsed since the first paratroopers had landed. Only now were the German commanders in Normandy beginning to realize that something important might be happening. The first scattered reports were beginning to come in.

General Erich Marcks, 84th Corps commander, was still with his staff who had surprised him with the birthday party, when his phone rang. Marcks picked up the receiver. Major Friedrech Hayn, Marcks's intelligence officer, recalls that "as he listened, the general's

body seemed to stiffen." The man who was calling was Lieutenant-General Wilhelm Richter, commander of the 716th Division holding the coast above Caen. "Parachutists have landed east of the Orne. . . . The area seems to be around Bréville and Ranville. . . ."

This was the first official report of the Allied attack to reach a major German headquarters. The time was 2.11 a.m.

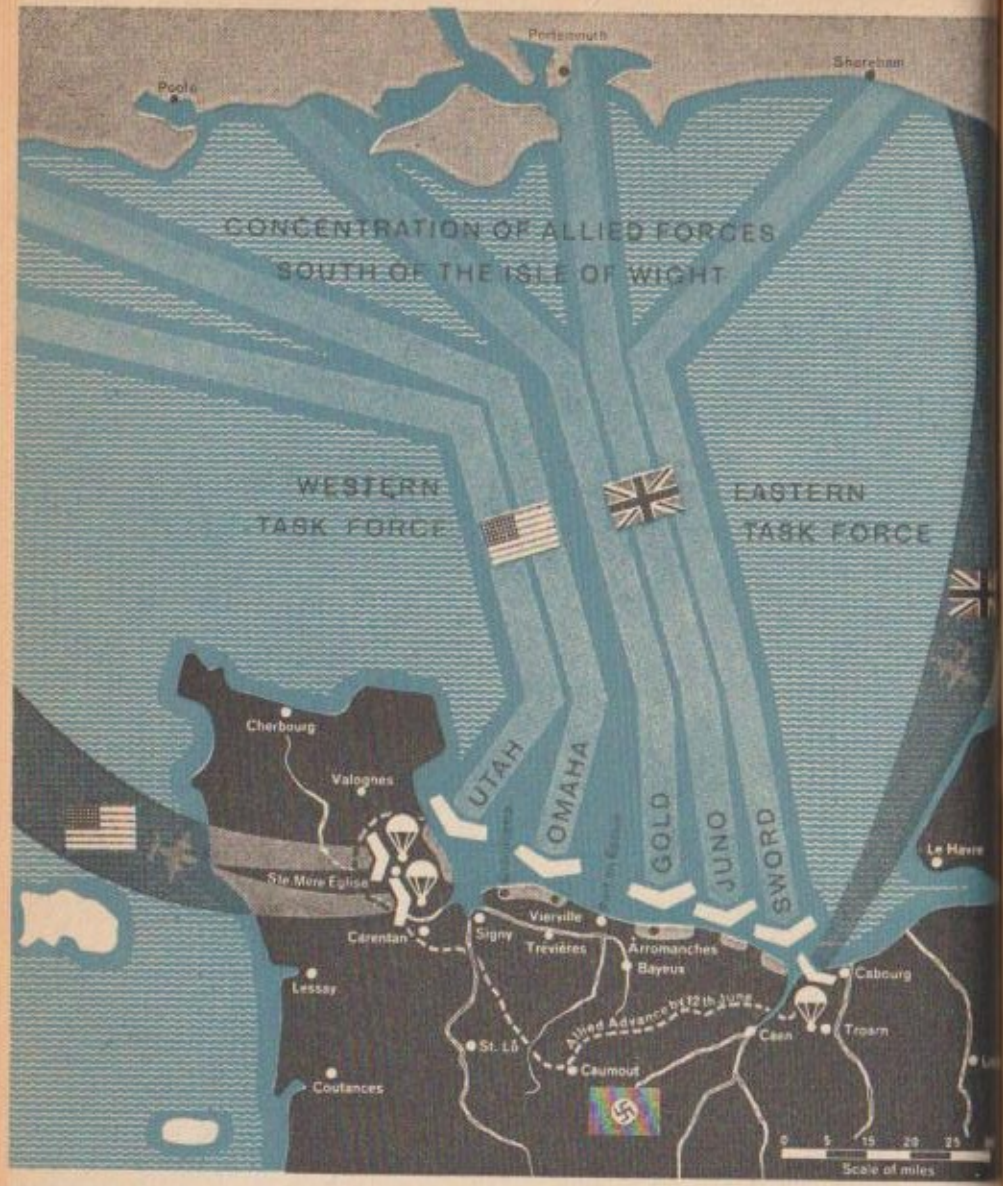
Marcks immediately telephoned Brigadier-General Max Pemsel, Chief of Staff of the 7th Army. Pemsel woke the 7th's Commanding Officer, Colonel-General Friedrich Dollman. "General," said Pemsel, "I believe this is the invasion. Will you please come over immediately?" As he put down the phone, Pemsel remembered something. Among a sheaf of intelligence bulletins that had come in during the afternoon, one had been from an agent in Casablanca. He had specifically stated that the invasion would take place in Normandy on 6th June.

As Pemsel waited for Dollman, the 84th Corps reported again: ". . . Parachute drops near Montebourg and Marcouf . . . troops engaged in battle."

Pemsel promptly alerted Major-General Dr. Hans Speidel, Chief of Staff to Field-Marshal Rommel, Commander-in-Chief of Army Group B, the most powerful force in the German West.

At about 2.30 a.m., General Josef Reichert of the 711th Division reported to the headquarters of the 15th Army—the second of Rommel's Group B armies—that paratroopers were landing at Cabourg. General Hans von Salmuth, in command of the 15th, phoned back to Reichert to get some first-hand information. "What the devil is going on down there?" von Salmuth demanded. "If you'll permit me, General," said Reichert, "I'll let you hear for yourself." A pause, and then over the phone von Salmuth could clearly hear the clatter of machine-gun fire. "Thank you," said von Salmuth, and hung up. Immediately he too called Army Group B.

These were strange, confusing minutes at Rommel's headquarters. Reports now came piling in from everywhere—reports that were



The Normandy Beachhead: How The Liberation of Europe Began

often inaccurate, incomprehensible and contradictory. Luftwaffe headquarters in Paris announced that "fifty to sixty two-engined planes are coming in" over the Cherbourg peninsula and that paratroopers had landed "near Caen." Admiral Theodor Krancke's headquarters, *Marinegruppenkommando West*, confirmed the British paratroop landings and added that "part of the parachute drop consists of straw dummies." Within a few minutes of their first message the Luftwaffe also reported parachutists down near Bayeux. Actually none had landed there at all. Other reports came in that the airborne troops were "dolls disguised as paratroopers."

The observation was partly right. The Allies had dropped hundreds of paratrooper-like rubber dummies south of the Normandy invasion area. Attached to each were strings of fireworks which exploded on landing, giving the impression of a small arms fight. A few of these dummies were to have an effect on the course of the Omaha Beach battle later in the day. They were to deceive General Marcks into believing that he was being attacked from the rear. He would send troops, that could have been committed at the beachhead, south to meet the make-believe attack.

At Rommel's headquarters men tried desperately to evaluate the rash of red spots sprouting over their maps. Mulling over the situation, the German officers arrived at conclusions which, in the light of what was actually happening, seem incredible. When Major Doertenback, acting intelligence officer of OB West (von Rundstedt's headquarters), phoned Army Group B for a report, for example, he was told that "the Chief of Staff views the situation with equanimity" and that "there is a possibility that parachutists who have been reported are merely baled-out bomber crews."

The 7th Army didn't think so. At 3 a.m. Pemsel called Speidel, Rommel's Chief of Staff, to report that the naval station at Cherbourg was picking up off-shore ships on its sound direction apparatus. Speidel's answer was that "the affair is still locally confined, and for the time being is not to be considered a large operation."

Even as Pemsel and Speidel talked, the last paratroopers of the

18,000-man airborne assault were floating down, and seventy gliders, carrying men, guns and heavy equipment, were crossing the coast of France, heading for the British landing areas near Ranville. And off Normandy were the transports carrying the men who would land in the first wave on Omaha Beach.

Probably the most baffled men in Normandy that night were the 16,200 seasoned troops of the tough 21st Panzer Division—once a part of Rommel's famed Afrika Korps. Clogging every small village, hamlet and wood in the area just twenty-five miles south-east of Caen, these men were sitting almost on the edge of the battlefield. Ever since the alert they had been standing by their tanks and vehicles, engines running, waiting for the order to move out. But, after the alert, no further word had come. With growing anger and impatience, they continued to wait.

Miles away, in a drunken sleep, Luftwaffe Colonel Josef "Pips" Priller heard the phone ring as though from a long way off. Second Fighter Corps Headquarters was on the line. "Priller," said the operations officer, "it seems that some sort of an invasion is taking place. I suggest you put your wing on the alert."

Pips Priller's language, as he remembers the conversation, is unprintable, but after telling his caller what was wrong with Corps Headquarters and the entire Luftwaffe High Command, he roared: "Who the hell am I supposed to alert? *I'm* alert! Wodarczyk is alert! But you fatheads *know* I have only got two damned planes!" With that he slammed down the receiver.

ALREADY the first reinforcements had reached the invasion troops. In the British area sixty-nine gliders had landed—forty-nine of them on the correct landing strip near Ranville. Casualties had been low, though crumpled wings, squashed cabins and crazily canted tails now lay everywhere.

The glider train had brought in the 6th Airborne's commander, Major-General Richard Gale, and his headquarters staff with more troops, heavy equipment and the all-important anti-tank guns. Men

had poured out of the gliders expecting to find the field under harassing enemy fire; instead they found a strange, pastoral silence. Sergeant John Hutley, from Gillingham, Kent, piloting a Horsa, had expected a hot reception and had warned his co-pilot, "Get out as quick as you can the moment we hit, and make a dash for cover." But the only sign of battle was off in the distance where Hutley could see the multi-coloured flash of tracers and hear the sound of machine-gun fire coming from near-by Ranville. Round him the landing field was bustling with activity as men salvaged equipment from the wrecks and hitched up the anti-tank guns to the backs of jeeps. There was even an air of cheerfulness now that the glider ride was over. Hutley and the men he had carried sat down in the wrecked cabin of their glider and had a cup of tea and a cigarette before setting out for Ranville.

Lieutenant-Colonel Terence Otway and his men of the 6th Airborne Division's 9th Parachute Battalion lay under heavy machine-gun fire at the edge of the barbed wire and minefields protecting the German battery at Merville, whose massive guns swept Sword Beach. Otway's situation was desperate. His carefully prepared plan of attack had disintegrated. One hundred Lancaster bombers were first to have saturated the battery with 4,000-pound bombs. Glider trains were to have brought in anti-tank guns, flame throwers, mine detectors, mortars and even lightweight aluminium scaling ladders. With this special equipment from the gliders, Otway's men were to rush the battery in a ground attack just as other gliders filled with more troopers crash-landed on top of the battery in an assault from the air.

That had been the plan. But none of the 4,000-pound bombs had hit the battery. The special glider train with artillery, flame throwers, mortars and mine detectors had been lost. Otway's own 700-man battalion had been so scattered in the drop that he had been able to round up only 150 of them. And these soldiers had only their rifles, Sten guns, grenades, a few Bangalore torpedoes and one heavy machine-gun.

Despite these handicaps, Otway's men had grappled with each problem, improvising brilliantly. With wire cutters they had already cut gaps through the outer barricade of wire and placed their few Bangalore torpedoes in position ready to blow up the rest. One group of men had cleared a path through the minefields. It had been a hair-raising job. They had crawled on hands and knees across the moonlit approaches to the battery, feeling for trip wires and prodding the ground ahead of them with bayonets. Now Otway's 150 men crouched in ditches, bomb craters and along the sides of hedges, waiting for the order to attack. The gliders, due to crash-land on the battery as the ground attack went in, were overhead. Otway could hear the soft rustle of the machines as they came over the battery. But they would not come down unless they received a special signal—a starshell fired from a mortar. Otway had neither the shell nor the mortar.

Helplessly Otway watched as the gliders, silhouetted against the moon, gradually lost height and wheeled back and forth, their pilots searching desperately for the signal he could not send. As the gliders circled lower the Germans opened up. The machine-guns which had pinned down the troopers now turned on the gliders. Streams of twenty-millimetre tracers ripped into the unprotected canvas sides. Still the gliders circled, following the plan, doggedly looking for the signal. And Otway, agonized, almost in tears, could do nothing.

Then the gliders gave it up. One veered off to land four miles away. The other passed so low over the waiting, anxious men that Private Alan Mower, from Redhill, Surrey, and Private Pat Hawkins thought it was going to smash into the battery. At the last moment it lifted and crashed instead into a wood some distance away. There was now nothing more to wait for. Otway ordered the attack. Private Mower heard him yell: "Everybody in! We're going to take this bloody battery!" And in they went.

With a blinding roar the Bangalore torpedoes blasted great gaps in the wire. Lieutenant Mike Dowling yelled, "Move up! Move up!"

Yelling and firing, Otway's paratroopers plunged into the smoke of the explosions and through the wire. Ahead of them, across the no-man's-land of minefields, manned trenches and gun-pits, loomed the battery. Suddenly red flares burst over the heads of the advancing paratroopers, and immediately machine-guns, *Schmeisser* and rifle fire poured out to meet them. Through the deadly barrage, the paratroopers crouched and crawled, ran, dropped to the ground, got up and ran some more. They dived into shell craters, pulled themselves out and went forward again. Mines exploded. Private Mower heard a scream and then someone yelled, "Stop! Stop! There's mines everywhere!"

Over on his right, Mower saw a badly wounded corporal sitting on the ground waving men away, and shouting, "Don't come near me! Don't come near me!" There were yells and screams and the flash of grenades as paratroopers piled into the trenches and fought hand-to-hand with the enemy.

Private Sidney Capon, of South London, reaching one of the trenches, suddenly found himself facing two Germans. One of them hastily raised a Red Cross box high above his head in a token of surrender. For a moment, Capon didn't know what to do. Then he saw other Germans surrendering and paratroopers leading them down the trench. He handed over his two captives and continued towards the battery.

There, Otway, Lieutenant Dowling and about forty men were already fighting fiercely. Troopers who had cleared out trenches and gun-pits were running round the sides of the earth-banked concrete fortifications, emptying their Sten guns and tossing grenades into the apertures. The battle was gory and wild. Privates Mower and Hawkins and a Bren gunner, racing through a torrent of mortar and machine-gun fire, reached one side of the battery, found a door open and plunged inside. A dead German gunner was lying in the passageway; there seemed to be nobody else about. Mower left the other two men by the door and went along the passage. He came to a large room and saw a heavy field piece on a platform. Next to it

great stacks of shells were piled. Mower rushed back to his friends and excitedly outlined his plan to "blow the whole business up by detonating grenades among the shells."

But they didn't get the chance. As the three men stood talking there was the blast of an explosion. The Bren gunner died instantly. Hawkins was hit in the stomach. Mower thought his back had been "ripped open by a thousand red-hot needles." He couldn't control his legs. They twitched involuntarily—the way he had seen dead bodies twitch. He was convinced he was going to die and he didn't want to end like this and he began to call out for help. He called for his mother.

Elsewhere in the battery Germans were surrendering. Private Capon caught up with Dowling's men just in time to see "Germans pushing each other out of a doorway and almost begging to surrender." Dowling's party split the barrels of two guns by firing two shells simultaneously through each barrel, and temporarily knocked out the other two. Then Dowling found Otway. Standing before the colonel, his right hand holding the left side of his chest, Dowling said: "Battery taken as ordered, sir. Guns destroyed." And then he moved on. Moments later Otway found Lieutenant Dowling's lifeless body. He had been dying at the time he made his report.

Otway led his battered battalion out of the bloody Merville battery. Of the 200 Germans, 178 were dead or dying, and Otway had lost almost half his own men—seventy killed or wounded. Ironically the four guns were only half the reported size. And within forty-eight hours the Germans would be back in the battery and two of the guns would be repaired and firing on the beaches. But for the critical few hours ahead the Merville battery would be silent and deserted.

Most of the badly injured had to be left behind, for Otway's men had neither sufficient medical supplies nor transport to carry them. Mower was carried out on a board. Hawkins was too terribly wounded to be moved. Both men were to survive—even Mower with fifty-seven pieces of shrapnel in his body. The last thing

Mower remembers as they moved away from the battery was Hawkins yelling: "Mates, for God's sake, don't leave me!" Then the voice grew fainter and fainter and Mower mercifully drifted into unconsciousness.

IT WAS nearly dawn—the dawn that 18,000 paratroopers had been fighting towards. In less than five hours they had more than fulfilled the expectations of General Eisenhower and his commanders. The airborne armies had confused the enemy, disrupted his communications and now, holding the flanks at either end of the Normandy invasion area, they had to a great extent blocked the movement of enemy reinforcements.

In the British zone glider-borne troops were firmly astride the vital Caen and Orne bridges, and paratroopers were now in position on the heights overlooking Caen. By dawn the five German-held crossings over the Dives would be demolished. Thus the principal British assignments had been completed, and as long as the various arteries could be held, German counter-attacks would be slowed down or stopped altogether. At the other end of Normandy's five invasion beaches the Americans had done equally well.

The men of the Allied airborne armies had invaded the Continent from the air and secured the initial foothold for the invasion. Now they awaited the arrival of the seaborne forces with whom they would drive into Hitler's Europe.

Everywhere men waited for this dawn, but none so anxiously as the Germans. For by now a new and ominous note had begun to creep into the welter of messages pouring into Rommel's and von Rundstedt's headquarters. All along the invasion coast Admiral Krancke's naval stations were picking up the sound of ships—not just one or two as before, but ships by the score. For more than an hour reports had been mounting up. At last a little before 5 a.m. the persistent Brigadier-General Pemsel of the 7th Army telephoned Rommel's Chief of Staff, Major-General Speidel, and said bluntly, "Ships are concentrating between the mouths of the

Vire and the Orne. An enemy landing and large-scale attack against Normandy is imminent."

Field-Marshal von Rundstedt at his headquarters, OB West, outside Paris, had already reached a similar conclusion. To him the impending Normandy assault still looked like a "diversionary attack" and not the real invasion. Even so von Rundstedt had moved fast. He had already ordered two massive Panzer divisions—the 12th SS and the *Panzer Lehr*, both lying in reserve near Paris—to assemble and rush to the coast. Technically both these divisions were not to be committed without Hitler's specific approval. But von Rundstedt had taken the chance; he could not believe that Hitler would countermand the order. He dispatched an official request for the reserves.

At Hitler's headquarters in Berchtesgaden in the balmy unrealistic climate of southern Bavaria, the message was delivered to the office of Colonel-General Alfred Jodl, Chief of Operations. Jodl was asleep, and his staff believed that the situation had not yet developed sufficiently for his sleep to be disturbed. The message could wait till morning.

Three miles away, at the "Eagle's Nest," Hitler's mountain retreat at Obersalzberg, the Fuehrer and his mistress Eva Braun were also asleep. Hitler had retired as usual at 4 a.m. and his personal physician Dr. Morell had given him a sleeping draught (he was unable to sleep now without it). At about 5 a.m. Hitler's Naval *aide*, Admiral Karl Jesko von Puttkamer, was awakened by a call from Jodl's headquarters. Puttkamer's caller—he cannot remember who it was—said that there had been "some sort of landings in France." Nothing precise was known yet—in fact, Puttkamer was told, "the first messages are extremely vague." Did Puttkamer think that the Fuehrer should be informed? Both men considered it and then decided not to wake Hitler. Puttkamer remembers that "there wasn't much to tell him anyway, and we both feared that if I woke him at this time he might start one of his endless nervous scenes which often led to the wildest decisions." Puttkamer

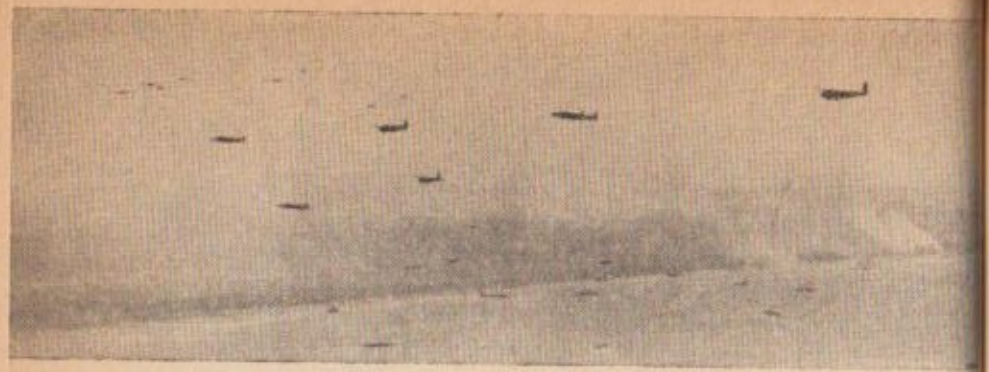
decided that the morning would be time enough to give Hitler the shattering news.

MAJOR WERNER PLUSKAT in his bunker overlooking Omaha Beach had heard nothing from his superiors since 1 a.m. But what about the paratroopers, the massed formation of planes? Pluskat could not rid himself of his gnawing uneasiness. Once more he swung the artillery glasses over to the left, picked up the dark mass of the Cherbourg peninsula and began another slow sweep of the horizon. Nothing was changed. Everything seemed peaceful.

Behind him, in the bunker, his dog Harras was stretched out asleep. Near by his gunnery officers, Captain Wilkening and Lieutenant Theen, were talking quietly. Pluskat joined them. "Still nothing out here," he told them. "I'm about to give it up." But he walked back to the aperture and stood looking out as the first streaks of light began to lighten the sky. He decided to make another routine sweep. Wearily, he swung the glasses over to the left again. Slowly he tracked across the horizon. He reached the centre of the bay. The glasses stopped moving. Pluskat tensed, stared hard across the sea.

Through the scattering, thinning mist the horizon was magically filling with ships—ships of every size and description, ships that casually manoeuvred back and forth as though they had been there for hours. There appeared to be thousands of them. It was a ghostly armada that had somehow appeared from nowhere. Pluskat stared in frozen disbelief, speechless, moved as he had never been before in his life. At that moment the world of the good soldier Pluskat began falling apart. He says that in those first few moments he knew, calmly and surely, "that this was the end for Germany."

He turned to Wilkening and Theen and, with a strange detachment, said simply, "It's the invasion. See for yourselves." Then he picked up the phone and called Major Block at the 352nd Division's headquarters. "Block," said Pluskat, "it's the invasion. There must be 10,000 ships out here. It's fantastic! It's unbelievable!"



The gliders carried airborne troops over the forces fighting for a foothold on the beaches to landing points inland. Their mission: to prevent enemy reinforcements getting to the vulnerable beachheads, and to clear the planned advance routes

Men, tanks, guns and all the supplies for the liberation army poured on to the Normandy beaches. When the Mulberry harbours, concrete caissons and blockships were in position (above) a port the size of Dover was created

There was a slight pause and then Block said, "Which way are these ships heading?" Pluskat, phone in hand, looked out of the aperture of the bunker and replied, "Right for me."

NEVER HAD there been a dawn like this. In the murky, grey light, in majestic, fearful grandeur, the great Allied fleet lay off Normandy's five invasion beaches. The sea teemed with ships. Battle ensigns snapped in the wind all the way across the horizon from the edge of the Utah area on the Cherbourg peninsula to Sword Beach near the mouth of the Orne.

Outlined against the sky were the big battleships, the menacing cruisers, the whippet-like destroyers. Behind them were the squat command ships, sprouting their forests of antennae. And behind them came the convoys of troop-filled transports and landing-ships, lying low and sluggish in the water. Circling the leading transports, waiting for the signal to head for the beaches, were swarms of bobbing landing-craft, packed with the men who would lead in the first waves.

The great spreading mass of ships seethed with noise and activity. Windlasses whirred as booms swung out amphibious vehicles. Chains rattled in the davits as assault boats were lowered away. And through it all, over the ships' public address systems, came a steady flow of messages and exhortations: "Fight to get your troops ashore, fight to save your ships, and if you've got any strength left, fight to save yourselves. . . . Get in there and give 'em hell! . . . Don't forget the Big Red One is leading the way. . . . Remember Dunkirk! Remember Coventry! God Bless You All. . . . *Nous mourons sur le sable de notre France chérie, mais nous ne retournons pas.* (We die on the sands of our beloved France, but we do not turn back)."

The first wave of assault troops could not yet see the misty shores of Normandy. They were still more than nine miles away. Some warships were already duelling with German naval coastal batteries, but the action as yet was remote and impersonal for the men in the first waves—nobody was firing directly at them. Sea-sickness was still their biggest enemy.

The time was 5.50 a.m. The British fleet had been firing at their beaches for more than twenty minutes. Now the bombardment began in the American zone. The entire invasion area erupted with a roaring storm of fire. The maelstrom of sound thundered back and forth along the Normandy coast as the big ships slammed steadily away at their pre-selected targets. The grey sky brightened with the hot flash of their guns, and along the beaches great clouds of black smoke began to bunch up into the air.

Off Sword, June and Gold beaches the battleships *Warspite* and *Ramillies* lobbed tons of steel from their fifteen-inch guns towards powerful German gun batteries at Le Havre and round the mouth of the Orne. Manoeuvring cruisers and destroyers poured streams of shells into pillboxes, concrete bunkers and redoubts. With incredible accuracy, the sharp-shooting HMS *Ajax*, of River Plate fame, knocked out a battery of four six-inch guns from a distance of six miles off-shore.

Now a new sound throbbed over the fleet. Slowly at first, like the mumbling of some giant bee, and then building up to a great crescendo of noise, the bombers and fighters appeared. They flew straight in over the massive fleet, flying wing-tip to wing-tip, formation after formation—11,000 planes, Spitfires, Thunderbolts and Mustangs whistled in over the heads of the men.

With apparent disregard for the rain of shells from the fleet they strafed the invasion beaches and headlands, zoomed up, swept round and came in again. Above them, criss-crossing at every altitude, were the medium bombers and, above these, out of sight in the heavy cloud layer, droned the heavies—the Fortresses, Lancasters and Liberators of the RAF and the US 8th Air Force. It seemed as though the sky could not possibly hold them all.

Men looked up and stared, eyes damp, faces contorted with a sudden emotion almost too great to bear. It was going to be all right now, they thought. There was the air cover—the enemy would be pinned down, the guns knocked out, the beaches would be cratered with foxholes. But unable to see through the cloud

layers, and unwilling to risk bombing their own troops, the 329 bombers assigned to the American zone were already unloading 13,000 bombs up to three miles inland from their targets—the deadly defences of Omaha Beach.

IN HIS BUNKER above Omaha Beach, Major Werner Pluskat was wondering how many shells his emplacement could stand. Another shell hit the cliff face at the very base of the hidden position. The shock of it spun Pluskat round and hurled him backward. He fell heavily to the ground. Dust, dirt and concrete splinters showered about him. He couldn't see through the clouds of white dust but he could hear his men shouting. Again and again shells smashed into the cliff. Pluskat was so dazed by the concussion that he could hardly speak. He saw that he was covered from head to foot with a fine white dust and his uniform was torn. For a moment the shelling lifted and, through the thick haze of dust, Pluskat saw Theen and Wilkening, his two gunnery officers, on the concrete floor. He yelled to Wilkening. "Better get to your position while you have a chance." Wilkening looked glumly at Pluskat—his observation post was some distance away. Pluskat took advantage of the lull to phone his batteries.

To his complete amazement not one of his twenty guns—all brand-new Krupps of various calibres—had been hit. He could not see how the batteries, all lying roughly half a mile from the coast, had escaped; there were not even any casualties among the crews. Pluskat began to wonder if observation posts along the coast were being mistaken for gun positions. The damage round his own post seemed to indicate it.

Then Pluskat noticed that Harras was gone. But he had little time to bother about the big dog now. He picked up the phone again, walked over to the second aperture and looked out. There seemed to be even more assault boats in the water than when he had last looked and they were closer now. Soon they would be within range. He called Lieutenant-Colonel Ocker at headquarters. "All

my guns are intact," he reported. "Good," said Ocker, "now you'd better get back to your headquarters immediately." Pluskat rang his gunnery officers. "I'm going back," he told them. "Remember, no gun must fire until the enemy reaches the water's edge."

The landing-craft carrying US 1st Division troops to their sector on Omaha Beach had not far to go now. Behind the bluffs overlooking the beach sectors code-named Easy Red, Fox Green and Fox Red, the gun-crews in Pluskat's four batteries waited for the boats to get just a little nearer.

By now the long bobbing lines of assault craft were less than a mile from Omaha and Utah Beaches. For the 3,000 Americans in the first wave H-Hour was just fifteen minutes away.

The noise was deafening as the boats, long white wakes streaming out behind them, churned steadily for the shore. In the slopping, bouncing craft the men had to shout to be heard over the roar of the diesels. Overhead, like a great steel umbrella, the shells of the fleet still thundered. And rolling out from the coast came the booming explosions of the Allied air forces' carpet bombing. Strangely, the guns of the Atlantic Wall were silent. Troops saw the coastline stretching ahead and wondered about the absence of enemy fire. Perhaps, many thought, it would be an easy landing after all.

The great square-faced ramps of the assault craft butted into every wave and chilling, frothing green water sloshed over everyone. There were as yet no heroes in these boats—just cold, miserable, anxious men, so jam-packed together, so weighed down by heavy equipment that more often than not there was nowhere to be seasick except over one another.

Several landing-craft began to sink. Some men were picked up by rescue boats, others would float for hours. And some soldiers, their yells and screams unheard, were dragged down by their equipment and ammunition. They drowned within sight of the beaches, without having fired a shot.

Now the deadly martial music of the bombardment seemed to grow and swell as the thin wavy lines of assault craft closed in on

Omaha Beach. Landing-ships lying about 1,000 yards off-shore joined in the shelling; and then thousands of flashing rockets whooshed over the heads of the men. To the troops it seemed inconceivable that anything could survive the massive weight of firepower that raked the German defences. The beach was wreathed in haze, and plumes of smoke from grass fires drifted lazily down from the bluffs. Still the German guns remained silent. The boats bored in. In the threshing surf and on the beach, men could now see the lethal jungles of steel and concrete obstacles.

They were strewn everywhere, draped with barbed wire and capped with mines. Behind the defences the beach itself was deserted; nothing and no one moved upon it. Closer and closer the boats pressed in . . . 500 yards . . . 450 yards. Still no enemy fire. Through waves that were four to five feet high the assault craft surged in and now the great bombardment began to lift, shifting to targets farther inland. The first boats were barely 400 yards from the shore when the German guns—the guns that few believed could have survived the raging Allied air and sea bombardment—opened up.

Through the din and clamour one sound was nearer, deadlier than all the rest—the sound of machine-gun bullets clanging across the steel, snout-like noses of the boats. Then artillery opened up; mortar shells rained down—and all along the four miles of Omaha Beach German guns pounded the assault craft.

It was H-Hour.

THE MOST INTENSE fire on "Bloody Omaha" came from the cliffs and high bluffs at either end of the crescent-shaped beach.

Men fell all along the water's edge—some were killed instantly, others called pitifully as the incoming tide slowly engulfed them. Within the first few minutes of the carnage at Fox Green one entire company was put out of action. Less than a third of the men survived the bloody trip from the boats to the edge of the beach. Their officers were killed, severely wounded or missing, and the men, weaponless and shocked, huddled at the base of the cliffs. Another

company in the same sector suffered even higher casualties. Misfortune piled upon misfortune for the men of Omaha Beach. Soldiers now discovered that they had been landed in the wrong sectors. Some came in almost two miles away from their original landing areas.

Piling up along the shore were the flotsam and jetsam of the invasion. Heavy equipment and supplies, boxes of ammunition, smashed radios, field telephones, gas masks, entrenching tools, canteens, steel helmets and life preservers were strewn everywhere. Great reels of wire, ropes, ration boxes, mine detectors and scores of weapons—from broken rifles to stove-in bazookas—littered the sand. The twisted wrecks of landing-craft canted up crazily out of the water. Burning tanks threw great spirals of black smoke into the air. Bulldozers lay on their sides among the obstacles. And off one sector, floating in and out among all the cast-off materials of war, men saw a guitar.

Into the chaos, confusion and death on the beach poured the men of the second wave—and stopped. Minutes later the third wave came in—and they stopped. Men lay shoulder to shoulder on the sands, stones and shale. They crouched down behind obstacles; they sheltered among the bodies of the dead. Pinned down by the enemy fire which they had expected to be neutralized, confused by their landings in the wrong sectors, bewildered by the absence of sheltering bomb craters that they had expected from the air-force bombing, and shocked by the devastation and death all round them, the men froze on the beaches. They seemed in the grip of a strange paralysis.

Overwhelmed by it all, some men believed the day was lost. One man was sitting at the edge of the water, seemingly unaware of the machine-gun fire which ripped all over the area. He sat there "throwing stones into the water and softly crying as if his heart would break."

The shock was not to last long. Even now a few men here and there, realizing that to stay on the beach meant certain death, were on their feet and moving.

Ten miles away, on Utah Beach, it was a different story. Here the men of the 4th Division were swarming ashore and driving inland fast. The third wave of assault boats was coming in and still there was virtually no opposition. A few shells fell on the beach, some scattered machine-gun and rifle fire rattled along it, but there was none of the fierce fighting that the 4th had expected. To many, the landing on Utah was almost routine. The assault seemed an anti-climax—the long months of training at Slapton Sands in England had been tougher.

As yet only a few officers knew the reason why the Utah landings had met so little opposition. By a fortunate error they had been landed in the wrong place. Confused by smoke from the naval bombardment, caught by a strong current, a solitary control boat had guided the first wave into a landing more than a mile south of the designated beach.

Now, on the beaches named Sword, Juno and Gold, the British and Canadian troops were landing. For almost fifteen miles—from Ouistreham at the mouth of the River Orne to the village of Le Hamel on the west—the shore-line was choked with landing-craft disgorging troops.

Nearly everywhere along the British assault area, the high seas and the underwater obstacles were proving as deadly as the Germans.

The first men in had been the frogmen—120 underwater demolition experts whose job it was to cut thirty-yard gaps through the obstacles. They had only twenty minutes in which to work before the first assault waves bore down upon them. The obstacles were formidable—more densely sown than in any other part of the Normandy invasion area. Frogman Peter Henry Jones of Bournemouth, a Royal Marine commando, swam into a maze of steep ramps, gates, hedgehogs and concrete cones. In the thirty-yard gap Jones had to blow he found twelve major obstacles, some of them fourteen feet long. He did not see how he could possibly finish in time. Neither did Lieutenant John Taylor of the RNVR. When

Taylor saw the fantastic array of underwater defences surrounding him, he thought, "the bloody thing is impossible." But he knew he had to keep on going.

It was the same all along the beaches. As the frogmen feverishly worked, blowing up obstacles singly because they were too large to blow up in groups, DD tanks and the first-wave assault craft bore in upon them. Frogmen, rushing out of the water, saw landing-craft, turned sideways by the heavy seas, crash into the obstacles. Mines exploded, steel spikes on hedgehogs ripped along the hulls of the boats and, all over the area, craft began to founder.

Surprisingly, there were few casualties among the troops as the landing-craft tried to manoeuvre through the obstacles. But when they did occur, they were terrible. On Gold Beach, where frogman Peter Jones was now working with the Royal Engineers on the obstacles, a landing-craft approached with troops standing ready to disembark. Caught by a sudden swell, the craft turned sideways, lifted and crashed down on a series of mined obstacles. Jones saw it explode with such a shattering blast that it must have been carrying large quantities of explosives. As he watched, "like a slow-motion cartoon, a man standing to attention—shot up into the air as though lifted by a water spout . . . at the top of the spout bodies and parts of bodies spread out like drops of water."

Boat after boat got caught on the obstacles. Off Juno Beach, Lieutenant Michael Aldworth of the 48th Royal Marine Commando was totally unaware that his landing-craft was slowly sinking. He had been more concerned about the mortar and machine-gun fire that he could hear bursting all round as they came in. Aldworth and about fifty men were in the forward infantry hold of the craft. They heard men rushing down along the decks towards the ramp.

Aldworth's men wanted to go too. "How soon do we get out of here?" they yelled. Aldworth yelled back, "Wait a minute, chaps, it's not our turn." There was a long pause and then somebody inquired, "Just how long will we have to wait, old man? The hold here is filling with water." Aldworth had not even noticed. Now,

he quickly ordered his men up on deck. They were taken off by another assault craft which had already delivered one load of troops to the beach. There were so many boats, Aldworth recalls, that "it was rather like hailing a taxi in Bond Street."

On the other side of the British area, the 47th Royal Marine Commando had swung west out of Gold Beach to drive towards Port-en-Bessin, and a link-up with the Americans. They expected to see the first Yanks from Omaha Beach by noon. From Gold, too, marched the men of the 50th Division towards Bayeux, ten miles away. And from their beachheads at Juno and Sword the British-Canadian forces headed in for Carpiquet airport and Caen.

BERCHTESGADEN lay quiet and peaceful in the early morning. At the Fuehrer's headquarters Colonel-General Jodl had begun to study reports of the invasion which had come in during the night.

General Walter Warlimont telephoned. Warlimont, some time earlier, had received von Rundstedt's teleprinter message requesting the Panzer reserves which could be released only on Hitler's order. He had talked the matter over with von Rundstedt's chief of staff, Major-General Blumentritt—now he reported to Jodl.

"Blumentritt has called," he told Jodl. "Von Rundstedt is requesting the release of the Panzer reserves. He wants to move them to the invasion area as soon as possible."

As Warlimont recalls, there was a long silence while Jodl pondered the request. "Are you so sure of all this?" Jodl asked. "I'm not sure that this is the invasion." He went on, "According to the reports it could be a diversionary attack . . . part of a deception plan. Finally Jodl said: "I do not think that this is the time to release the reserves . . . we must wait for further clarification of the situation."

On this day, when the defeat of the Allied invasion depended on power and speed, the necessary decision would come too late—not for another eight and a half hours.

Meanwhile the man who had anticipated just such a situation and had hoped to discuss it with Hitler was less than an hour's drive

from Berchtesgaden. Field-Marshal Erwin Rommel was on leave at his home in Herrlingen, Ulm. The time was 7.30 a.m. There is no record in the meticulously-kept Army Group B War Diaries that the Field-Marshal had even been briefed on the Normandy landings by this time.

Even now—although the invasion had actually been in progress for seven and a half hours—the full and devastating scope of the Allied attack could not be gauged by the staffs of von Rundstedt's and Rommel's headquarters.

Everywhere along the front the vast network of communications had broken down. The pathfinders and paratroopers had done their job well. As the German 7th Army's Brigadier-General Pemsel put it, in a call to Rommel's headquarters, "I'm fighting the sort of battle that William the Conqueror must have fought—by ear and eye only. My officers phone and say: 'I hear sounds and see ships,' but they cannot give me a true picture of the situation."

At 7th Army headquarters at Le Mans, however, the officers were enthusiastic. It looked as though the tough 352nd Division, holding the beachhead in the Vierville-Colleville area, had already smashed the landings. Their spirits were so high that when a message came in from the 15th Army offering reinforcements, the 7th Army's operations officer turned them down.

At Rommel's headquarters in the old castle at La Roche-Guyon, there was a similar air of optimism. Vice-Admiral Friedrich Ruge, Rommel's naval *aide*, shared in the general elation. But Ruge noticed one peculiar thing: the household staff of the Duke and Duchess de la Rochefoucauld were going through the castle taking the Gobelin tapestries down from the walls.

IN ENGLAND it was 9.30 a.m. General Eisenhower had paced the floor all night waiting for each new report to come in. There was no doubt now that a foothold had been achieved on the Continent. Although the hold was slight, there would be no need for him to release the message he had quietly scribbled out just twenty-four

hours before. In case the Allied attempt was defeated, he had written: "Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the air force and the navy did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do. If there is any blame or fault attached to the attempt, it is mine alone."

Instead, at 9.33 a.m., a far different message was broadcast to the world. It read: "Under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies this morning on the northern coast of France."

At 10.15 the phone rang in Field-Marshal Erwin Rommel's home. It was Major-General Speidel. The purpose: the first complete briefing on the invasion. Rommel listened with sinking heart.

It was no longer a "Dieppe-type raid." It was the day he had been waiting for—the one he had said would be the "longest day." It was clear to Rommel that, although there would be months of fighting, the game was up. It was only mid-morning, but the "longest day" was over. By an irony of fate the great German general was on the sidelines for the decisive battle of the war. All he could say when Speidel had finished was, "How stupid of me! How stupid of me!"

Condensed from "The Longest Day," published by Victor Gollancz, London

The Idol of San Vittore

By Indro Montanelli

Translation and adaptation by Erwin Lessner

MY STORY begins on that day in March 1944 when His Excellency General Della Rovere, intimate of Marshal Badoglio and technical adviser to General Alexander, was brought to San Vittore Prison and put in the cell opposite mine. The Italian underground was attempting, at that time, to disrupt the flow of German reserves to the fighting front in the south. The general, I learned, had been captured by the Germans in a northern province when he was put ashore by an Allied submarine to assume command of guerrilla operations there. I was impressed by his aristocratic bearing. Even Franz, the brutal German overseer of the prison, stood at attention before him.

Of all the German-operated "confession" factories in Italy, San Vittore was the worst. Captured Italian underground fighters who resisted "routine" questioning were brought here. Then Gestapo Commissar Mueller and his picked SS men—by means now celebrated in the annals of refined torture—usually squeezed desired information out of even the toughest customers.

Six months had passed since my own arrest. I had been "interrogated" several times, and I was exhausted and discouraged. I sometimes wondered how much longer I could hold out. Then, to my astonishment, Ceraso, one of the Italian guards, unlocked my cell door one day and told me that General Della Rovere wished to see me.

The general's door was unlocked, as always. Moreover, he had

a bed, whereas the rest of us slept on bare planks. Immaculately groomed, monocle in his right eye, he greeted me courteously. "Captain Montanelli? I knew before I landed that you were here. His Majesty's government is keenly interested in your fate. We are confident that even when you fall before a German firing squad you will fulfil your duty, your most elementary duty as an officer. But please stand at ease." Only then did I realize that I was standing at attention—heels touching, thumbs against trouser seams.

"We officers all lead provisional lives, do we not?" he asked. "An officer is, so to speak, a bridegroom of the Goddess of Death; *novio de la muerte*, the Spanish call it." He paused, polishing his monocle with a white handkerchief, and it occurred to me that a name often reflected the bearer's personality. Della Rovere means "of the oak." Here, surely, was a man of solid timber. "They have already sentenced me," he continued. "How about you?"

"Not yet, Your Excellency," I replied, almost apologetically.

"They will," he said. "The Germans are rigorous when they expect a confession, but they are also chivalrous in their esteem for those who refuse to confess. You have not talked. Well done! That means that you will be honoured by being shot through the chest, not through the back. I urge you to persist in your silence. But should you undergo torture—I don't mean to question your moral strength, but there are limits to physical endurance—I suggest that you give them just one name: mine. Tell them that, whatever you did, you were acting under my orders. . . . By the way, what are the charges against you?"

I told him everything—unreservedly. His Excellency listened like a father confessor, occasionally nodding approvingly.

"Your case is as clear-cut as mine," he said when I had finished. "We were both apprehended carrying out official orders. Our only remaining duty is to die fighting on the field of honour. It should be easy to die decently."

When Ceraso was locking me back in my cell I implored him to send me a barber the next day. That night I folded my trousers and

creased them on the window lattice before stretching myself out on my plank to sleep. During the following days I saw many prisoners visit the general's cell. When they came out, they were all more erect, they no longer looked dejected.

Noise and disorder in our isolated sector abated. No. 215, who had rent the air with cries for his wife and children, fell silent and showed great composure when he was called for interrogation. Ceraso told me that after talking with the general almost everyone asked for the barber, and for a comb and soap. Prison guards took to shaving daily and even tried to speak pure Italian instead of Neapolitan or Sicilian slang. Even Mueller, when he inspected the place, grudgingly commended the general improvement.

Best of all, the "confession factory" no longer produced confessions. The men persisted in a stubborn silence. From his own great store of courage, Della Rovere gave them strength. From his own experiences under arrest, he gave them invaluable advice.

"The most dangerous hours are in the early afternoon," he would warn them. "The mere longing for distraction could make you confess." Or, "Don't stare at the walls. Close your eyes from time to time and the walls will lose their power to choke you." He reprimanded them for neglecting their appearance: "Neatness builds morale." He knew that the military formalities they observed with him strengthened their pride. And he never stopped reminding them of their duty towards Italy.

Someone cautiously inquired about His Excellency's personal reaction under questioning. The general laughed. "I was questioned by my old friend Field-Marshal Kesselring," he said. "My task was easy, for Kesselring already knew all there was to know—except how I came to be on a British submarine when I was picked up."

"Did you really trust the British?" Kesselring had asked.

"Why not?" was the general's retort. "We even trusted the Germans!" The general seemed to get a great deal of pleasure out of recalling this encounter.

After a while, a rumour began to sweep through the prison that

the general was a counterspy, a German stool pigeon. The Italian guards, even though drawn from the dregs of Mussolini's old régime, felt there were limits to the humiliations they would take. They agreed among themselves to watch the general constantly; if he turned out to be a spy, they would strangle him.

Next morning Della Rovere received No. 203, a major who was supposed to have more than the usual amount of information and who had not talked. Ceraso lingered near the cell door, and other Italian guards looked on. "You will undergo severe torture," they heard the general say to the major. "You must confess nothing. Keep your mind blank, force yourself to believe that you know nothing. Even thinking of the secrets you are guarding might bring them to your lips." The major listened, ashen-faced, as the general said to him what he had said to me: "If you are driven to speak, tell them that whatever you did you did on my orders."

That afternoon, an apologetic Ceraso brought His Excellency a few roses, a gift of the Italian prison guards. The general accepted the flowers graciously; he seemed not to have the slightest notion that he had been distrusted.

One morning the Germans came for Colonels P and F. Before being led to the courtyard, the officers were granted one last wish—to say farewell to the general. I saw them at his cell door, standing at attention. I couldn't hear what the general said to them, but both officers smiled. He shook their hands—something I'd never seen him do. Then, as if suddenly aware of the Germans present, he stiffened and saluted. The men returned the salute, turned on their heels and walked to their deaths. We learned later that both shouted, "Long live the King!" as they faced the firing squad.

That afternoon I was questioned again. Commissar Mueller told me that my fate would depend on the results of this interrogation. If I were to persist in my silence. . . . I stared at him with wide-open eyes, yet I could hear nothing; I couldn't even see him. I saw instead the pale, composed faces of Colonels P and F, the smiling face of His Excellency. I heard a quiet, sedate voice in my ear: *novio de la*

muerte . . . elementary duty as an officer . . . to die fighting on the field of honour. After I had been questioned in vain for two hours, the interrogation ended. I was not tortured, but even if I had been, I think I would have been able to hold out. On my way back, I asked Ceraso to let me stop at His Excellency's cell.

The general put aside the book he was reading and looked at me searchingly as I stood at attention. Then, before I spoke, he said, "Yes, that's what I expected you to do; you couldn't have done differently." He rose. "I cannot put all I would say into words, Captain Montanelli, but since there is no one else to report on us, let this upright Italian guard be a witness to what we say in these our last days. Let him listen to every word. I am well satisfied, Captain, I am pleased indeed. Bravo!"

That night I was truly alone in this world. But my beloved country seemed nearer and dearer and more real than ever before. I never saw the general again. Only after the liberation did I learn about his end. One of the survivors of Fossoli told me the story.

Fossoli was a notorious extermination camp where the ways of dying were intricate and of great variety. When General Della Rovere was transferred there by armoured train, with hundreds of others, he maintained his dignity. Throughout the trip he sat on a heap of knapsacks the others had gathered to provide him with a couch. He refused to rise when a Gestapo officer inspected the train. Even when the officer slapped him across the face and shouted, "I know you, you swine, Bertoni," he remained unperturbed. Why should he explain to this blundering German that his name was not Bertoni but Della Rovere, that he was a general of an army corps, intimate friend of Badoglio and technical adviser to Alexander? Unruffled, he picked up his monocle and squeezed it on again. The German walked away, cursing.

At Fossoli the general no longer enjoyed the privileges granted him in San Vittore. He was quartered with everyone else in a single barrack and, like everyone else, he was put to work. His fellow prisoners sought to spare him the lowliest chores and took turns

substituting for him. But he never tried to evade his tasks, difficult as they might be for a man who was no longer young. And at night he reminded his comrades that they were not convicts but officers. Facing his glaring monocle and listening to his voice, they stood a little straighter.

The massacre at Fossoli on 22nd June 1944 may have been in reprisal for the Allied victories near Genoa. At any rate, on orders from Milan, sixty-five names were drawn from a total of 400 inmates. As a Lieutenant Tito read the list, the doomed men had to step forward from the ranks. When he called the name Bertoni, nobody stepped forward. "Bertoni!" he roared, staring at Della Rovere. His Excellency did not budge.

Did Tito want to show indulgence to a doomed man? No one could say. In any case, he suddenly smiled. "All right, all right," he said. "Della Rovere, if you wish."

Everyone held his breath, watching the general. He pulled his monocle from his pocket and with a remarkably steady hand squeezed it against his right eye. "*General* Della Rovere, if you please," he said calmly as he joined the waiting group.

The sixty-five were handcuffed and led to the wall. All were blindfolded except His Excellency, who steadfastly refused, and they granted him his wish. While four machine-guns were brought into firing position, His Excellency stepped forward, his bearing proud and determined. "Gentlemen, officers," he called in a firm voice. "As we face the ultimate sacrifice, may our thoughts turn faithfully towards our beloved country. *Long live the King!*"

Tito shouted, "Fire!" and the machine-guns rattled. They put the general in his coffin, still wearing his monocle.

THE TRUE STORY of General Della Rovere, which I learned after his death, is one of heroism and an impersonation almost beyond belief. For the idol of San Vittore was no general. Neither Badoglio nor Alexander had ever heard of him. And his name was not Della Rovere. He was one Bertoni, from Genoa, a thief and confidence

man with a long prison record. The Germans had arrested him for some petty crime and during the questioning had realized that the man was a superb natural actor. They believed that his unscrupulous outlook and his talent for acting would make him an excellent agent for tricking information out of guerrilla prisoners.

Bertoni was ready for a deal. He would do as requested in return for preferred treatment in prison and early release. The Germans invented the Della Rovere story and coached him in his part.

When Bertoni was sent to San Vittore he asked for and was granted a brief period during which he would gain the trust of the men he would later victimize. But Bertoni was shrewder than they knew; he was determined to trick no one but the Germans.

And then came the amazing transformation. Acting General Della Rovere's part, Bertoni *became* Della Rovere. He undertook a superhuman task—to make San Vittore confession-proof and its inmates strong enough to meet their fate. And by his commanding presence, his impeccable grooming, his high courage and faith, he brought a new dignity and sense of personal worth to the poor devils who were incarcerated there.

But, finally, he knew his time was running out. Commissar Mueller grew more and more impatient with his delays: why weren't the confessions coming through? When "Della Rovere" spoke to me that last day in his cell and asked the guard to be a witness, he knew that it was all over, that this was the only way the outside world might learn his story, the only way that Italy might know he had kept his trust.

On 22nd June 1945, the first anniversary of the massacre at Fossoli, I stood in the Cathedral of Milan and watched the Cardinal-Prince-Archbishop of that city consecrate the coffins of the heroes of Fossoli. The Cardinal knew whose body lay in the coffin marked Della Rovere. He knew, too, that no one had a better right to the title of general than the occupant of that coffin, the former thief and jailbird, Bertoni.

The Radar Screens that told Lies

By Allan Michie

EVER since the 1942 dress rehearsal at Dieppe, the Germans had boasted of what they would do to an Allied invading force. Yet when the invasion came, on 6th June 1944, some 6,000 Allied ships sailed to the Normandy coast unmolested and began landing troops before the Germans even knew they were there. For the Germans were hoaxed by a phoney invasion which made enemy radar operators think the Allies were invading the Pas de Calais, 200 miles up the coast from the real invasion beaches.

This superbly ingenious D-Day ruse was the climactic episode of a four-year-old top-secret radio battle, the winning of which saved the Allies from disastrous plane losses, maintained their air supremacy, and finally paved the way for the all-out assault on Germany.

The tremendous speed of air warfare made both sides vitally dependent on radio-telephone and wireless communications, which were necessary to assemble and direct huge bomber fleets as well as to lead intercepting fighters to enemy bombers. Since the mainstay of both German and British anti-aircraft defences was radar, the objective of the ether war was to disrupt the other side's radio communications and radar-detection devices.

Radio countermeasures, abbreviated in official jargon to RCM, began quietly in the autumn of 1940 when Goering's bombers undertook night raids against Britain's cities. The German bomber crews were guided to their targets by flying along narrow radio beams,

intersected by cross-directional beams, which gave the signal that they were approaching their target.

The British decided to interfere with these signals. Radio waves attempt to travel in a straight line, but many natural causes produce slight deviations. So RCM experts undertook to reproduce and exaggerate these natural deviations. Because the Germans often switched on their beams hours before a raid, the British operators had time to find and duplicate them. Thus they were able to retransmit the beams and gradually to "bend" them away from the intended target city. A two-degree deflection would lead enemy bombers almost nine miles off over a 250-mile course.

For sprawling London and other easily identifiable port cities, beam interference was relatively ineffective. But when smaller, inland towns were the targets, "bent" beams often caused the Luftwaffe bombers to drop their bombs in open country. The greatest beam "bending" success was when 200 German bombers dropped 400 bombs—and killed two chickens.

After the Germans caught on and abandoned the beam system, substituting wirelessed directions from home bases, the British added a new trick to the radio war. When a German navigator radioed for a bearing on his position, the British operator working on the Luftwaffe's frequencies would cut in and give a false bearing. German pilots, muddled with false navigational instructions often flew round, hopelessly lost, until daylight and then landed in southern England in the belief that it was France.

It was the Germans who scored the first success in jamming radar. In February 1942 the German warships *Scharnhorst*, *Prinz Eugen* and *Gneisenau* sneaked out of Brest and headed up the Channel. British radar experts manning coastal stations noticed a slight jamming. By the time the German flotilla reached the Dover Straits the jamming was continuous, preventing British ground controllers from seeing and directing their ships and planes. The German warships dashed up the Channel in safety.

About the same time the British discovered that the enemy's

radar was subject to interference. RAF bomber crews returning from missions reported that when they switched on their IFF (Identification Friend or Foe sets: radio transmitters which automatically gave off a code signal that identified their aircraft), the enemy's radar-directed searchlights were sometimes doused or turned away. Examination of German radar equipment—acquired in a daring raid by commando and airborne troops—confirmed the report that some IFF sets were accidentally jamming German radar. The IFF sets were quickly fitted with jamming devices which made this interference less a matter of chance. Then high-powered transmitters, set up along the south coast of England, began jamming the enemy's early-warning radar. Parallel with this radar interference, the RAF jammed the Luftwaffe's vital ground-to-air radio-telephone and wireless communications.

There was never a dull moment in the war in the ether. Once the RCM offensive got under way there was a nightly chase up and down the wave-bands, with the Germans twisting and turning to find wave-lengths that were free from interference, and the British relentlessly pursuing to blot them out. In their search for new wave-lengths, the Germans frequently modified their equipment. But almost as soon as the new equipment was operating, British experts brought out their own new devices for jamming it.

One of these, perfected after almost insurmountable technical difficulties, was an airborne jammer, light enough to be installed in jammer bombers. The equipment was ingenious. A receiver automatically searched the wave-bands, and when signals were detected a "blip" appeared on the screen. The operator had only to check the original of the signals and flick on the transmitter, which sent a wobbling wig-wog note up and down the selected speech channel, blotting out conversation.

This jammer, code-named "Airborne Cigar," was so successful that the Germans had to use a very high-powered transmitter to radio-telephone spoken instructions to their night fighters.

The RAF then set up a high-powered station to broadcast on the

same frequency and "ghost voices" began broadcasting contrary instructions and misleading information to the German night fighters. The "ghosts" spoke idiomatic German and trained themselves to mimic perfectly the inflections of the German controllers.

This technique, called Operation "Corona," was first used on the night of 22nd-23rd October 1943, when RAF bombers made a heavy attack on Kassel. During the raid the Germans realized that something had gone wrong and RAF radio monitors heard the German controller telling his night fighter pilots to "beware of another voice," warning them "not to be led astray by the enemy." After a particularly violent outburst by the German controller, the "ghost" voice said: "The Englishman is now swearing." The German shouted: "It is not the Englishman who is swearing it's me!" By the end of the raid the confused German pilots were yelling abuse at each other.

The RCM experts anticipated that the Germans might suddenly attempt to beat the "ghost voice" by putting a woman on the microphone. So three German-speaking WAAFs were coached and kept standing by. A week or so later, when the Germans actually did put on a woman announcer, one of the WAAFs quickly mimicked her and Luftwaffe pilots were just as confused as before.

One of the most effective and spectacular radio countermeasures was the use of aluminium foil strips, known as "Window," to confuse the German radar operators. RAF scientists discovered that a number of strips dropping close together, but not touching, would simulate the reflections of an aircraft on radar-indicator equipment. If enough strips were dropped at intervals, they would either black out the enemy's indicator screens or cause so many false "echoes" that the radar operators would not be able to identify the genuine aircraft "echoes."

"Window" was initially used on the first of the four massive raids which virtually obliterated Hamburg in the last week of July 1943. Each of the 791 bombers sent out that night dropped one bundle of 2,000 foil strips every minute along a planned route to the

target. Assuming that each bundle showed an "echo" for fifteen minutes, the total number of "echoes" on the enemy's screens during the raid represented 12,500 aircraft.

The effect on the German radar-based defences was immediate and devastating. Bomber crews reported that the radar-controlled searchlights waved aimlessly about the skies, while the predicted flak fire, based on gun-laying radar, gave place to hit-or-miss barrage fire, sent blindly up in the direction of the profusion of "echoes." The German night fighters, who depended on ground radar for their general direction and airborne radar for the final interception, were helpless. The few RAF bombers lost that night were caught only by chance interception or blind flak hits.

With their radar-direction largely nullified by "Window," the Luftwaffe's night fighters were thrown back to a system of free-lance interceptions, guided partly by ground observers who plotted the bombers by sight and sound and, assisted by flares and search-lights, operated with sound locators. This defence was rudimentary compared to the pre- "Window" system, and its weak spots let the Allies bomb the bull's-eye target of the war, Berlin.

By Spring 1944 the Germans were so confused by the Allied jamming that they were sending messages simultaneously on twenty wave-lengths hoping at least one could be heard.

The pay-off to the whole RCM campaign came during the critical hours before H-Hour, D-Day.

Although preliminary air attacks had seriously reduced the efficiency of the German coastal radar system, many were still functioning on the eve of the invasion. To insure the success of the landings these radar watchers had to be blinded or bluffed. In the area to be invaded the enemy's radar also had to be blinded, for the initial success of the invasion depended upon the element of surprise. And in other areas the German radar operators had to be made to see things that would suggest an invasion force coming in.

To accomplish these ends, RCM experts produced and rehearsed a five-part scheme of deception: Operations "Taxable,"

"Glimmer," "ABC Patrol," "Titanic" and "Mandrel." On the night of 5th-6th June, while the real invasion fleet sailed across the English Channel towards the Cherbourg peninsula, the five parts of the hoax went simultaneously into operation.

The Germans were already convinced that the Allies would try to land above Le Havre, probably in the Pas de Calais. As part of Operation "Taxable," eighteen small ships of the Royal Navy steamed that way to create the impression of an intended landing on that part of the French coast. Each ship towed low-flying balloons which would produce a "big-ship echo" on the enemy radar screens. But because the enemy radar operators could quickly size up the limited strength of this force, each of twelve aircraft flying low above the ships dropped a bundle of "Window" foil at one-minute intervals to give the impression of a large convoy slowly heading towards France. Jammers in each plane were kept going continuously to prevent German radar from recognizing the "Window" deception. Meticulous timing and careful adherence to a schedule were necessary, but for three and a half hours the planes flew continuously over a twelve by eight-mile area.

Simultaneously, Operation "Glimmer" carried out a similar deception in a direction heading for Boulogne. In the area between, twenty-nine Lancaster planes, the "ABC Patrol," manoeuvred for four hours off the enemy coast to lure German night fighters from the real landing areas. They also continuously jammed the enemy radar from eighty-two airborne jammers. A secondary reason for this "ABC" operation was the hope that the Germans would mistake the patrolling planes for air cover for the "invasion" simulated by "Taxable" and "Glimmer."

At the same time, Operation "Titanic," designed to distract the Germans while airborne troops were coming down in Normandy, was getting under way. Just before the real airborne landings began, a small force of RAF planes flew in above Le Havre and dropped scores of dummy, wooden parachutists which floated down into the areas round Fécamp. At the same moment, other

planes were releasing dummy paratroops across the peninsula behind Cherbourg, on the right flank of the real airborne landings. Enough "Window" was dropped with the dummies to give the harassed enemy radar operators the impression that the dummy parachute attack was twenty times larger than it was.

Meanwhile, the real invasion armada was concealed behind the most intensive radar-jamming operations yet attempted. Twenty-four RAF and American bombers, equipped with jammers, flew back and forth at 18,000 feet along a line fifty miles from the enemy coast, jamming the German radar stations on the Cherbourg peninsula for hours on end. This barrage not only concealed the Allied bombers coming to pound the Normandy coastal defences and hid the troop-carrying planes and gliders taking part in the airborne landings, but it also shielded the invasion fleet. Once the ships came within range, they too joined in the jamming barrage.

The deception worked to perfection.

The Germans mistook Operation "Glimmer," near Boulogne, for a genuine threat. E-boats were rushed out to intercept the imaginary mighty convoy; night fighters were sent up to engage the planes of "ABC Patrol" under the impression that they were protecting the invading fleet. This drew most of the enemy night fighters from the Normandy areas where the vulnerable troop-carrying planes and gliders were operating.

The mock airborne drops by Operation "Titanic" also brought a speedy enemy reaction. While the Germans rounded up the wooden parachutists, the real airborne forces were able to consolidate the flanks east and west of the landing beaches. The jamming from planes and ships threw the German radar system into hopeless confusion and at one point Allied wireless monitors heard the enemy radar plotters identifying the "ABC Patrol" as the spearhead of a great bomber force heading for Paris.

The objective was achieved. Only when the Allied naval guns began the preliminary bombardment on the dot of 5.30 a.m. did the Germans realize where and when the invasion had come.

'I Fell 18,000 feet without a Parachute'

By Nicholas Stephen Alkemade

ex-Warrant Officer, Royal Air Force

At 21,000 feet the rear turret of a Lancaster bomber is a cold and lonely place, separated from the rest of the crew by two sets of doors and twelve yards of fuselage. It's a cramped space, little more than a shell for the body of the gunner, clad in his bulky flying clothes. There is not even room for him to wear a parachute—only the harness; his chute-pack is stowed in the main fuselage, a few feet inside the second door, and separate from the packs of the rest of the crew.

In an emergency the gunner has to leave his turret, get his chute-pack, hook it on to the harness, then bale out, hoping that the trailing radio aerial will not cut him in two. Being a "Tail-End Charlie" was rated by the RAF as a "hazardous occupation."

As our Lancaster neared Berlin on the night of 24th–25th March 1944, we could see the long fingers of searchlight beams probing the sky. Closing in, we spotted the sparkling red and green markers laid down for us by our Pathfinders ahead. Plane after plane made its bombing run, and fireworks erupted below us: golden incendiary fires, brilliant white and red explosions and the orange flashes of ack-ack guns. Then . . . .

Bombs away! Our own 4,000-pound high-explosive bomb and three tons of incendiaries hurtled downward. Through weaving searchlight beams we turned for home, keeping a sharp watch for night fighters. I could see them at work in the distance. A flash of

white light would burst into a great ball of fire, to arc across the sky towards the black earth below. Some poor "Lanc" had got it, and some of my chums would not return to their base.

We were somewhere over the Ruhr when suddenly a series of shuddering crashes raked our aircraft from nose to tail, then two terrific thunderclaps as two cannon shells exploded on my turret ring mounting. The plexiglass blister shattered and vanished—one large fragment slicing into my right leg.

Luckily my turret had been facing astern. I quickly depressed my guns and stared out. Not more than fifty yards from me was the shadowy outline of a Junkers 88 fighter, his leading edge a line of brilliant white flashes as he blazed away at our wounded ship. I aimed point-blank and squeezed the trigger of my four banked 303 Brownings. They fired simultaneously and the Junkers was transfixed by four streams of fiery tracers. He peeled off, his port engine trailing flame. I did not watch to see his fate; I was too concerned about my own.

Flaming fuel from our fuel tanks was streaking past me. On the intercom I started to report to the captain that the tail was on fire, but he cut me short with, "I can't hold her for long, lads. You'll have to jump. Bale out! Bale out!"

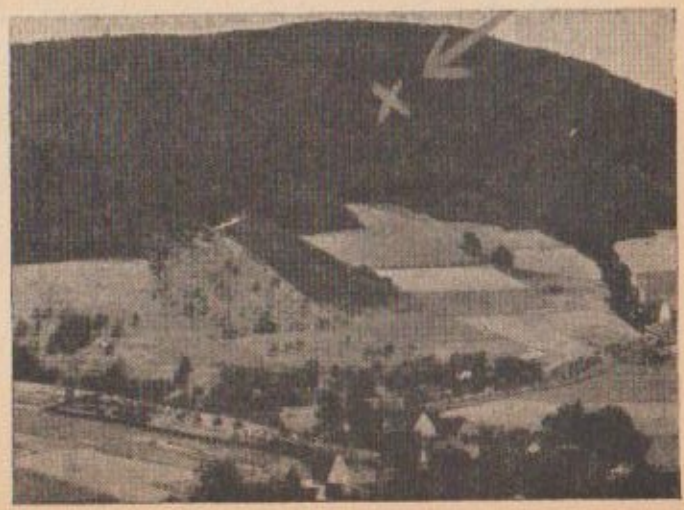
Flicking open the turret doors I turned and opened the fuselage door beyond—and stared for a horrified instant into a giant cauldron. Flame and smoke swept towards me. I recoiled, choking and blinded, into my turret. But I *had to get my chute*! I opened the doors again and lunged for the pack.

Too late! The case had been burnt off and the tightly-packed silk was springing out, fold after fold, and vanishing in puffs of flame.

In the turret I took stock. Here I was, only twenty-one years old, and this was the end of the road. Already oil from the turret's hydraulic system was on fire and flames seared my face and hands. At any moment the doomed aircraft might explode.

Should I endure this roasting hell or should I jump? If I was to die, better a quick, painless end by diving into the ground. . . .

Nicholas Alkemade; he landed at 122 mph



Alkemade fell into this fir forest; a heavy layer of snow helped to cushion his fall

Quickly I hand-rotated my turret abeam, flipped the doors open and, in an agony of despair, somersaulted backward into the night.

Oh, the blessed relief of being away from that shrivelling heat! Gratefully I felt the cold air against my face. I had no sensation of falling. It was more like being at rest on an airy cloud. Looking down I saw the stars beneath my feet.

"Must be falling head first," I thought.

If this was dying, it was nothing to be afraid of. I only regretted that I should go without saying good-bye to my friends. I would never again see Pearl, my sweetheart back home in Loughborough. And I'd been due to go on leave the following Sunday.

Then—nothing. I must have blacked out.

IN SLOW stages my senses returned. First there was an awareness of light above me, which gradually became a patch of starlit sky. The light was framed in an irregular opening that finally materialized as a hole in thickly interlaced boughs of fir trees. I seemed to be lying in a deep mound of underbrush heavily blanketed with snow.

It was bitterly cold. My head throbbed and there was a terrible pain in my back. I felt all over my body. I found I could move my legs. I was all in one piece.* In a sudden up-welling of unworthiness and of delight, the very first thought to flash into my conscious mind was a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving, of humble praise and utter wonderment. On the floor of the little patch of fir forest, into which I had hurtled parachuteless from a hell three and two-fifths miles above it, this was not blasphemy. "Jesus Christ," I said, "I'm alive!"

I tried so sit up—but it hurt too much. Craning my neck I could

*A body falling freely in space, with no resistance of air, would drop sixteen feet the first second, forty-eight feet during the next, eighty feet in the third, etc. Falling from 18,000 feet, therefore, it would attain a final speed of 730 miles per hour before crashing to the earth.

A body falling through the atmosphere, however, is retarded by the resistance of the air. Because of this, Sergeant Alkemade's "terminal" speed has been estimated at approximately 122 miles per hour. His incredible survival can be attributed only to the fact that the final stage of his fall was cushioned by the thickly interlaced branches of fir trees and the heavy, snow-covered brush on which he landed.

see that my flying boots were gone and my clothes scorched and tattered. I began to be afraid of freezing to death. In the pocket of my tunic I found the flat tin, badly bent, in which I kept my cigarettes and my lighter. The cigarettes were unharmed; I lit up. My watch, I found, was still ticking. The luminous hands showed 3.20; it had been close to midnight when our aircraft was hit.

Attached to my collar was the whistle for use in case of ditching at sea to keep crew members in contact with one another.

"Here is one man who is happy to become a prisoner of war," I said to myself. From time to time I blew the whistle. It seemed hours later I heard a far-off "Hulloo!"

I kept whistling and the answering shouts grew closer. At last I could see torches approaching. Then some men and boys were standing over me. After relieving me of my cigarettes they growled, "*'raus! Heraus!*" ("Get up!") When they saw I couldn't they put a tarpaulin under me and dragged me across a frozen pasture to a cottage. There an old lady with a gnarled but kindly face gave me the finest egg nog I've ever tasted.

As I lay on the floor I heard a car pull up outside. Two men in plain clothes clumped into the room. They looked me over carefully. Then, quite indifferent to my pain, they yanked me to my feet and bundled me out to their car. We seemed to hit all the bumps on our way to a hospital.

I was a long time in the operating-room. Only later did I learn the sum of my injuries: burnt legs, twisted right knee, a deep splinter wound in my thigh, strained back, slight concussion and a deep scalp wound, first-, second- and third-degree burns on face and hands. Most of this damage I had sustained before jumping.

Finally, cleaned up and with most of the plexiglass fragments picked out of me, I was installed in a clean bed—but not to sleep. In came a tall, pompous character in a *Wehrmacht* uniform, thin as a hatchet in the face and wearing rimless glasses. Through an interpreter, a young convalescent soldier, he asked me the usual, probing questions: What targets did you attack? Where is your

base? How many aircraft are there at your base? . . . and many others. I stated my name, rank and number. To the other questions I could only reply, "I am not allowed to answer."

Then he began asking about my parachute. "Where did you hide if? Did you bury it?" (Spies dropping into enemy territory commonly concealed their parachutes; airmen falling out of sky battles did not.)

"Parachute?" I said. "I didn't use one!"

I thought Hatchet-Face would burst with rage. He let out a stream of oaths, then turned on his heel and stalked out. For three days the questioning was repeated. Finally I was left alone.

After three weeks, when my wounds were fairly healed, I was whisked off to the Dulag Luft camp near Frankfurt and put into solitary confinement. This gave me time to think out how I might convince my interrogators that my incredible story was true.

So I was ready when a week later a young lieutenant led me into the office of the *Kommandant* of the Dulag Luft. On his desk I was amused to see a packet of English cigarettes and a bar of chocolate.

"We have to congratulate you, I understand, Sergeant," the *Kommandant* said drily, in excellent English. "Would you tell me all about your remarkable escape yourself, please? I have only a garbled account from the *Herr Leutnant*. I gather you claim to have jumped from a blazing bomber at a height of 6,000 metres without a parachute—a very tall story, Sergeant, *nicht wahr?*"

He could prove the story if he cared to, I told him. Hadn't a wrecked Lancaster fallen in the Ruhr on the night of 24th–25th March? If so, that would be the plane I had jumped from. The burnt remnants of my parachute pack could be found just forward of the rear fuselage door. Also, he could examine my parachute harness—to see for himself that *it had never been used.*

The *Kommandant* listened to me in silence. "A really remarkable story," he said—"and I hear many!"

He fired some rapid German at the lieutenant, who saluted and left. The *Kommandant* handed me a cigarette and we chatted

pleasantly for the next quarter of an hour. Then the lieutenant, waving my parachute harness, burst into the office with three other officers, all shouting excitedly in German.

The lieutenant flung the harness on to the desk, pointed to the snap-hooks that were still in their clips and the lift-webs still fastened down on the chest straps. The *Kommandant* soberly took in these facts, then leaned back in his chair and studied each of us thoughtfully in turn. I'll never forget his next words; he spoke in English: "Gentlemen! A miracle—no less!"

He rose, came round his desk and offered me his hand. I took it. "Congratulations, my boy, on being alive! What a story to tell your grandchildren!"

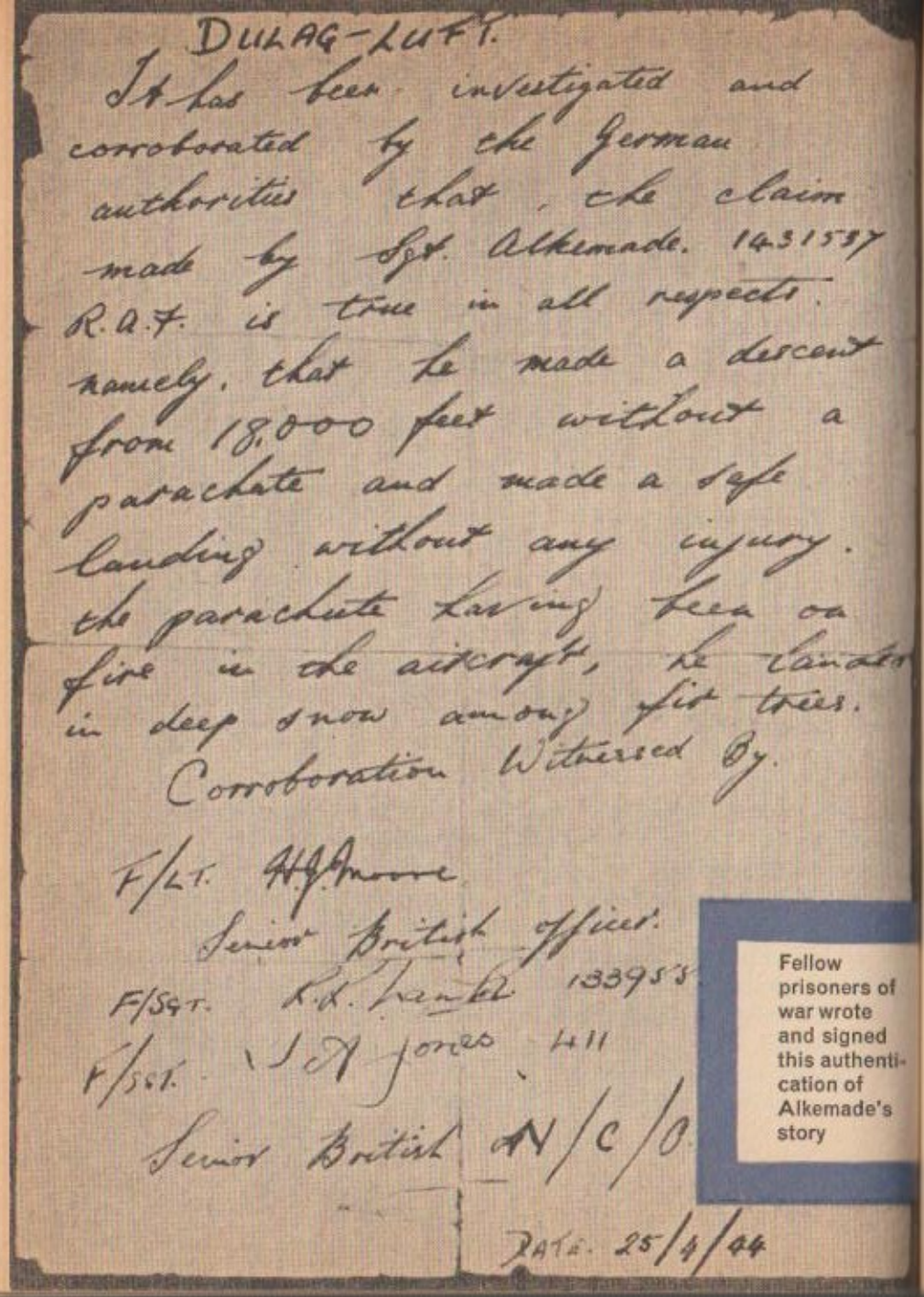
Then I was assailed with slaps on the back, handshaking and vociferous good wishes. The *Kommandant* dismissed me with, "Tomorrow, I promise, your comrades will be told how you became a POW."

In the *Kommandant's* office next morning I saw that the Luftwaffe authorities had been busy. On his desk lay some pieces of scorched metal, including the D-handle of a parachute ripcord and a piece of wire that would be the ripcord itself.

"The remains of your parachute pack," the *Kommandant* explained. "We found it where you said it would be. To us it is the final proof."

The wrecked Lancaster lay about twenty kilometres from where I had landed, I was told. Four of the crew had been burnt to death and had been buried in a military cemetery near Meschede with full military honours. From their names and numbers I realized that only "Ginger" Cleary, the navigator, Geoff Burwell, the radio operator, and myself were left. (They had been blown clear in the final explosion, I learned later.)

A German flying-officer and two NCO's marched me into the compound, where some 200 captured Allied flyers were assembled. I was directed to stand on a bench. Then the Luftwaffe officer recounted my story to the incredulous airmen.


DULAG-LUFT.

It has been investigated and corroborated by the German authorities that the claim made by Sgt. Alkemade. 1431537 R.A.F. is true in all respects. namely. that he made a descent from 18,000 feet without a parachute and made a safe landing without any injury. the parachute having been on fire in the aircraft, he landed in deep snow among fir trees.

Corroboration Witnessed By.

F/Lt. H.J. Moore
Senior British officer.

F/Sgt. R.R. Lamb 1339552

F/Sgt. T.A. Jones 411
Senior British N/C/O.

DATE. 25/4/44

Fellow prisoners of war wrote and signed this authentication of Alkemade's story

There was pandemonium. Nationalities were forgotten. I was mobbed by French, Germans, British and Americans, shaking my hand, shouting questions, forcing upon me gifts of a cigarette or a square of chocolate. Then I was presented with a paper, signed by the senior British officer at the demonstration, who had taken down the German authentication in writing and had it witnessed by the two senior British NCO's. It is only a faded scrap of paper but it will always be the proudest thing I own:

DULAG-LUFT

It has been investigated and corroborated by the German authorities that the claim made by Sgt. Alkemade, 1431537 RAF is true in all respects, namely, that he made a descent from 18,000 feet without a parachute and made a safe landing without any injury, the parachute having been on fire in the aircraft, he landed in deep snow among fir trees.

Corroboration Witnessed By
F/Lt. H. J. Moore
Senior British officer
F/Sgt. R. R. Lamb 1339552
F/Sgt. T. A. Jones 411
Senior British N/C/O's
DATE: 25/4/44

After the liberation in May 1945, RAF Intelligence checked the records at the Dulag Luft, found the reports of my strange adventure to be true and included them in the official records of the Royal Air Force.

Today Pearl and I are living happily in Loughborough. I have taken the first important steps towards following the *Kommandant's* advice: to tell my story to my grandchildren, though I shall have to wait until my children can provide me with them.

In the meantime, I can only wonder why such a marvellous thing should have happened to a man as ordinary as myself.

The aftermath of Bombay's devastating waterfront fire: derelict ships, twisted metal and a tangle of fire hoses

The Day Bombay Blew Up

By John Ennis

FRIDAY, 14th April 1944, was a pleasant spring day in Bombay, then a vital supply base for the planned invasion of Japan. The harbour was jammed with ships of every Allied flag. Western and Asian troops thronged the city, buying coloured silk saris, ivory elephants and joss sticks for souvenirs. In the dock-side district people were carrying on their everyday activities.

At 12.30 by the clock in the harbour tower, the dock workers stopped for lunch. On a Norwegian merchant ship, the *Belray*, Able Seaman Roy Hayward, going below, noticed what looked like a wisp of smoke coming from a ventilator of the *Fort Stikine*. This was a 7,142-ton cargo vessel which lay in the adjoining dock. She had left Liverpool seven weeks earlier loaded with ammunition and explosives, aircraft, stores and gold bars worth £2 million, intended to help stabilize the Indian rupee.

At 1.30 p.m. the dock workers returned from lunch to the *Fort Stikine*. As they entered No. 2 hold they saw smoke coming from the port side, nearest the quay. The stevedores scrambled up from the hold shouting "Fire!"

Men from a Bombay fire brigade pump on the quay promptly ran with their hoses to the ship. Not until their section leader was on board, however, did he remember that, for a fire in a ship carrying explosives, his instructions were to send an immediate No. 2 alarm which would call out a larger force. With orders to dial 290, his

sub-leader struggled back down the gangway, crowded with dock workers pushing to get ashore, and dashed to a telephone. But the telephone had no dial. Confused, he ran along the dockside, broke the glass of a fire alarm and rang the bell. Thus the fire brigade control-room received only a normal call for two pumps. The hands of the harbour clock tower stood at 2.16.

The *Fort Stikine* was a 400-foot floating bomb—a bomb with the fuse lit. The aircraft in her cargo, most of the stores and some of the ammunition and explosives had been unloaded at Karachi. There she had taken on 8,700 bales of cotton and quantities of lubricating oil, timber, sulphur, fish manure and resin. The cargo turned out to be a treacherous mixture. Oil, cotton, timber, sulphur and resin burn freely. Fish stinks.

Because of the stink, the master of the *Fort Stikine*, Captain A. J. Naismith, had told the dockers at Bombay to unload the fish first. When the fire broke out among the cotton bales they still had 6,000 cubic feet of timber on top of them. Above the timber the upper part of No. 2 hold was packed with explosives. Below the cotton lay a thick layer of ammunition.

Eight minutes after receiving the alarm the fire station officer arrived with two pumps. He sent an immediate No. 2 call to the control-room. Eight more pumps and an emergency tender turned out. At 2.35 p.m. Norman Coombs, chief of the Bombay fire brigade, arrived dressed in slacks and jacket. He had had no time to change into uniform.

In the meantime, Captain B. T. Oberst, an ordnance officer, rushed on board and secured a plan of the ship's stowage. Then he hurried to Captain Naismith: "You have enough explosive here to blow up the whole of the docks," he said. "The only way out is to scuttle the ship." Coombs joined Oberst in his plea for scuttling, but Colonel J. R. Sadler, general manager of the docks, disagreed. He told Naismith that the only safe action was to take the ship out to sea: there was only four feet of water between her keel and the harbour bed, a distance so short that the water would not cover

even the lower part of No. 2 hold. Captain Naismith, confused by conflicting advice, made no decision except to try to get in touch with the Lloyd's surveyor.

For nearly an hour the firemen poured water into the burning ship. During this time, most of the dockside workers went unconcernedly about their jobs. The *Fort Stikine* did not display the red flag indicating that she carried explosives. She sounded no warning blasts at any time. A sailor on the *Japalanda*, which lay astern of the *Fort Stikine*, grew so bored watching the fire-fighting that he went below to read.

But at least one onlooker saw trouble ahead. Able Seaman Roy Hayward, on the *Belray*, had fought fires in the London blitz. He saw the flames from the *Fort Stikine* turn a yellow-brown colour, and a phrase from his old fire service drill book leapt to his mind: "Yellow-brown fire—explosives!" He shouted to his comrades, "Down!" and fell on his face in the *Belray's* gun pit.

Suddenly a huge blaze roared up from the *Fort Stikine*, a flaring roman candle reaching beyond the top of the mast. A moment later came a shattering explosion. All over Bombay buildings shook and windows were smashed. Debris and blazing cotton fell in a rain of fire over sheds and ships. Of the firemen scrambling from the *Fort Stikine* sixty-six were killed outright, and eighty-three injured. The blast created a tidal wave which hurled the 5,000-ton, 400-foot-long *Japalanda* from her berth and lifted her bow 60 feet to come to rest on the roof of a dockside shed.

The explosion played capricious tricks. White-hot metal, flung haphazardly into the town, picked out victims at random. Captain Sidney Kielly, strolling with a friend, was cut in half by a piece of metal plate. His friend was unhurt.

On the dock C. W. Stevens, a marine surveyor, was talking with Captain Naismith and Chief-Officer Henderson of the *Fort Stikine*. Stevens was flung along the quayside. After the blast swept over him he stood up to find himself blackened and naked. Nobody saw Naismith and Henderson again.

Nearly a mile from the docks, D. C. Motliwala was sitting on his third-floor veranda. A bar of gold crashed through the roof and lay on the veranda floor.

Meanwhile, on the *Belray*, Able Seaman Hayward made his way from the gun pit to the boat deck which was strewn with the injured and dying. He picked up a man who had lost a leg, carried him down the gangway, then went back for others. Time after time he made his awful journey of mercy, placing the injured between two intact walls where they would be relatively safe from the continual bursts of ammunition.

The last man was an Indian seaman who had lost both legs. Hayward picked him up and carried him towards a small car on the quay. He had just reached the car when, from the red glow inside the pall of smoke that hid the *Fort Stikine*, there came a second roar, far greater than the first.

Hayward hastily bundled the man underneath the car, then pushed under as far as he could himself, lying there until the hail of fragments ended. Then he put the man into the car and saw him off to hospital.

Whereas the first explosion had burst sideways, losing some of its shock in the water and the quayside sheds, the second bore straight up, flinging flaming metal, timbers and cotton to a height of 3,000 feet. At the top of its trajectory the mass mushroomed and fell over an area of a 900-yard radius.

When the dust cleared, Norman Coombs, the fire brigade chief, saw that the harbour was ringed with fires. Leaving the docks to the military, he ordered the remnant of his forces into the residential district, where houses were now burning.

The human toll taken by this second blast was frightful. In two hours St. George's Hospital took in 231 victims, and treated 140 more in the casualty department. The chief theatre sister at the hospital took on some of the surgical cases herself to help the overworked doctors.

After the injured came the dead. By Sunday morning the hospital

mortuary was packed to the ceiling with corpses. Hundreds of bodies were never recovered.

The work of rescue, fire-fighting and salvage went on for many days. In a town where racial tension ran high (Bombay had only recently been the scene of bitter rioting) men of all nations joined in the common effort.

British and Indian soldiers, RAF men and Allied servicemen moved 39,398 cases of ammunition, weighing up to 115 pounds each, from Alexandra Dock. A party of WRNS set up a first-aid post. They worked all night, with only the flames to give them light. Red Cross girls parked a mobile canteen between the blazing warehouses. With ammunition exploding round them, they stayed until every fireman and rescue worker had had a drink.

By the light of searchlights from the cruiser, HMS *Sussex*, soldiers, sailors and harbour officials moved sixteen ships from Alexandra Dock into the open sea. Seven of the ships contained cargoes of explosives. Men with no previous experience handled the tugs. This delicate operation took nineteen hours, but the amateur pilots did not lose a single ship.

When the damage was added up, it was found that all twenty-seven ships in the two docks were sunk, burnt out or badly damaged. Three swing bridges over the entrances to the docks were blown partly from their seatings. The entrance to Victoria Dock was fouled by a 500-ton ship sunk inside and a 300-ton water-boat sunk outside, and the gateway itself was blocked by a mound of tangled masts and rigging. All the dock buildings were gaunt heaps of rubble. Some 6,000 Indian and 2,000 British servicemen worked night and day for six months, moving a million tons of debris, to get the harbour working again.

What caused the disaster? It is still a mystery. Sabotage was suspected but never proved, and arguments still roll to and fro between those who can never forget that shattering day in Bombay.

Condensed from The Herald, Melbourne

Herrlingen, Germany: 1944

What Really Happened to Rommel

By Countess Waldeck

GENERAL ERWIN ROMMEL was forty-nine years old when he catapulted into fame in May 1940 as commander of the 7th Panzer Division during the German sweep across France. Two years later, when his Afrika Korps stood only seventy miles from Alexandria, his name was a household word; Hitler made him a field-marshal, and the British called him the ablest general of the war.

When the Desert Rats who opposed him in Africa spoke of "doing a rommel" they meant doing a superb job. His cunning and talent for improvisation earned him the sobriquet "Desert Fox." Once, hard-pressed by the 8th Army, he fooled them into drawing back by convincing them of his superior strength. Knowing that every day the RAF photographed over the German lines, he ordered every available vehicle to drive incessantly for two whole nights, tracks over tracks, in the surrounding desert. The resulting photos made the British overrate the German forces, and they retreated.

Rommel had a quality which might be called military sex-appeal. It was in the cocky set of his cap; it was in his peasant-like cunning. To his men, who saw him rising out of the turret of his tank in the front battle line, he was the god of battle. "Stay close to me," he once said to one of his officers while they were under fire. "Nothing ever happens to me." But something did, in the end.

What are the little-known facts about his mysterious death? The official German story was that he died of injuries received when his

command car was strafed near Livarot, south of Le Havre, at the time of the Normandy invasion. But the truth is far more dramatic.

IT WAS during the losing battles of the African campaign that Rommel first came to realize Hitler's abysmal contempt for the individual human being. Rommel knew that the campaign was lost beyond redemption, owing to the German lack of petrol and equipment and the greatly reinforced British strength. He demanded that Hitler withdraw the German troops as the only means of saving thousands of men. Hitler replied excitedly: "Triumph or death!"

"I neither died nor triumphed," Rommel later commented dryly.

Before the surrender in Tunisia in May 1943, Hitler had ordered Rommel's return to Germany to become part of the Fuehrer's entourage—so that he would not be identified with the defeat.

The months that followed were bitter ones. Rommel had never joined the Nazi Party and had never been decorated with the golden party emblem. And, pre-occupied with self-aggrandizement, he had heretofore ignored the wholesale killings, the slave labour, the concentration camps, the Gestapo terror in the occupied areas. Now he was horrified by what the Nazis did in the name of the German people. "I conducted a clean war," he said, "but they soil my uniform." Later, when Hitler issued his notorious order to shoot hostages at the ratio of twelve to one, Rommel was one of the few German commanders who threw it in the wastepaper-basket.

What pained Rommel most was the realization, at last, that Hitler would drag Germany into the abyss with him rather than give up.

To bolster the confidence of the German people and impress the Allies, Hitler assigned to Rommel the ground command of the anti-invasion forces in Normandy. The General soon foresaw that a full-scale invasion could not be repelled with the meagre supply of material and troops at his disposal. In April 1944 he conferred with General Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel, military governor of France and a leader of the German resistance to Hitler, about ways to end the war in the west at once and overthrow the Nazi régime.

In the hope of gaining something a little better than the unconditional surrender proclaimed as Allied policy, Rommel wished to offer an armistice to Eisenhower and Montgomery without Hitler's knowledge. Its basis was to be the withdrawal of German troops behind the west wall. In return the Allies were to stop bombing German cities at once. In the east, however, the Germans were to continue fighting on a shortened front—Romania, Lemberg, the Vistula, Memel—"in defence of western civilization."

Rommel proposed to have Hitler seized by reliable panzer units and tried before a German tribunal. He did not believe in making a martyr of Hitler by killing him outright.

Meanwhile, the Allies swarmed ashore in Normandy, and on 15th July 1944, Rommel sent an ultimatum to Hitler demanding immediate armistice negotiations. He gave Hitler four days to answer.

On the evening of 17th July, Rommel, returning from the front, reached the outskirts of Livarot. Suddenly two planes with British markings headed directly towards him. One, flying only a few yards above the ground, strafed the left half of the car. Rommel was knocked unconscious and thrown out of the car. As he lay on the road, the second plane swooped down and opened fire. Rommel was so seriously wounded—a skull fracture, two fractures of the temple, a broken cheekbone, an injury to the left eye, a concussion of the brain—that doctors doubted he would live.

And, strangely, in the archives of the RAF there is no report mentioning the strafing of an isolated car near Livarot at that hour on 17th July. Was this Hitler's answer to Rommel's ultimatum?

In any case, this was the first of two severe blows to befall the anti-Nazi plot. The second came on 20th July. "Operation Valkyrie," the conspiracy of German Army leaders and anti-Nazi civilians to assassinate Hitler (into the preparations for which Rommel had been previously drawn by Stülpnagel), misfired. The bomb went off two yards from Hitler, wrecked his headquarters, injured twenty men and killed four. But Hitler miraculously escaped. Nazi revenge hunted down the known conspirators. Those caught were executed.

By autumn, Rommel had made a brilliant recovery; except for partial paralysis of one eye he was as good as new.

On 14th October, he rose early in his villa in Herrlingen, near Ulm, to meet his sixteen-year-old son, Manfred, who was arriving home for a brief army leave. But another, less welcome visitor was expected at noon that day. A telephone call the previous night had informed Rommel that General Burgdorf was being sent by the Fuehrer to discuss with him his "re-assignment to a new command." The Marshal remarked to Manfred at breakfast: "Burgdorf's coming may be a trap."

At twelve o'clock General Burgdorf arrived, accompanied by General Maisel. Rommel, with his wife and son, greeted the visitors. They kissed Her Excellency's hand. There was the usual exchange of platitudes about the weather and the Field-Marshal's splendid recovery. Presently Frau Rommel and Manfred withdrew.

A little after one o'clock Rommel came upstairs to his wife's room. "What is the matter?" Frau Rommel exclaimed, alarmed by the look on her husband's face.

"In a quarter of an hour I shall be dead," Rommel said absently, as though tasting the words for their meaning.

He told her quickly: The evidence of Stülpnagel (who had been strangled after he blinded himself in a suicide attempt) had left no doubt about Rommel's participation in the plot of 20th July. Hitler now gave him the choice between death by poison immediately or a trial before a people's court. The two generals made it quite clear that, if Rommel insisted on standing trial, reprisals would be taken against Frau Rommel and Manfred; if he let himself be poisoned, his family would be spared and would receive all the honours and pensions due the family of a German Field-Marshal. The Fuehrer was determined to keep from the German people the fact that their most popular general had plotted to overthrow him and to make peace.

With ghoulish precision Burgdorf outlined for Rommel the last fine details of the plan. On the drive to Ulm a poison would be given to him. Within three seconds he would be dead. His body would

Rommel, the "Desert Fox," at the height of his success

A soldier carries Rommel's medals as the coffin is borne through lines of troops

Frau Rommel and her son—actors in the grim charade of a state funeral

Hitler's wreath for the man he ordered to be murdered

be delivered to a hospital in Ulm. A message would go to the world that he had died suddenly of the after-effects of the injuries he had sustained on 17th July.

In that upstairs room Rommel divulged details of the diabolic plot to two others—his aide, Captain Aldinger, and Manfred. Then the three went downstairs.

Rommel let himself be helped into his greatcoat, then put on his cap, a little jauntily as usual. Manfred and Aldinger handed him his gloves and baton. Then he walked out to the car where his assassins waited, and drove off.

In all the annals of the Third Reich no scene exposes more flagrantly the psychological climate on which Hitler thrived. Here was no poor Jew helpless in the hands of the Gestapo. Here was a German Field-Marshal, complete with baton, the glory of his army, a legend over all the world for his courage and his cunning. Yet this man meekly let himself be taken away to his death.

At 1.25 p.m., General Burgdorf and General Maisel delivered Rommel to the hospital at Ulm. He was already dead. The doctor proposed an autopsy, but Burgdorf said quickly: "Do not touch the body. Berlin has arranged for everything."

Exactly what happened on that drive will probably remain a mystery for ever. Burgdorf perished with Hitler in the cellar of the Reich chancellery. Maisel and the SS driver insisted that they were made to leave the car for a moment and on their return found Rommel dying.

At the state funeral on 18th October, the assembly, studded with Nazi chieftains and high officers, behaved with solemn decorum. Field-Marshal von Runstedt delivered the oration in Hitler's place. Frau Rommel, pale and grim, had refused Runstedt's arm. A nameless tension threatened to burst through the thin veneer of well-bred punctilio. Only a few of those present, however, knew that they were attending the final act of a murder.

Condensed from Forum

In blossom today, then scattered:
Life is so like a delicate flower.
How can one expect the fragrance
To last for ever?

Admiral Takijiro Ohnishi (above), the emotional author of delicate poetry, recruited the "divine wind" pilots who died carrying out "the most diabolical tactic of war the world had ever seen." When Japan surrendered, Ohnishi committed *hara-kiri*

Death on a Divine Wind

By Captain Rikihei Inoguchi and Commander Tadashi Nakajima
Formerly officers of the Imperial Japanese Navy

ON 19TH OCTOBER, 1944, as dusk settled over Mabalacat airfield, the Philippines base of the 201st Japanese Air Group, a black car drew up at the command post and Admiral Takijiro Ohnishi stepped out. Commander of the 1st Air Fleet, he was regarded as the foremost exponent of aerial warfare. Now he summoned the 201st's staff officers into conference and said:

"The situation is so grave that the fate of the Empire depends on the outcome of the *Sho* operation. (*Sho*—Victory—was the ironic name which Tokyo gave to the operation designed to defend the Philippines against recapture.) A naval force under Admiral Kurita is to penetrate Leyte Gulf and there annihilate enemy surface units. The 1st Air Fleet will support that mission by rendering enemy carriers ineffective for at least one week. But we can no longer win by adhering to conventional methods of warfare. *In my opinion, the enemy can be stopped only by crash-diving on their carrier flight decks with Zero fighters carrying 250-kilogram bombs.*"

The listeners were electrified by the Admiral's words; it was obvious that the purpose of his visit was to inspire suicide attacks. When Admiral Ohnishi finished, Commander Tamai, the 201st's executive officer, asked permission to consult with his squadron leaders. He was confident that most of his pilots would dedicate themselves as human missiles when they heard of the plan. "They said little," he reported later, "but their eyes spoke eloquently of a

willingness to die for their country." All but two volunteered.

It was decided that Lieutenant Yukio Seki should lead the attack. He was a man of outstanding character and ability, a graduate of the Naval Academy at Eta Jima. When told of the assignment by Commander Tamai, Seki leaned forward at the table, supporting his head in his hands, his eyes closed. The young officer had been married just before leaving the homeland. For several seconds he sat motionless. Then, raising his head, he spoke in a clear, quiet voice, "Please do appoint me to lead the attack."

Shortly after sunrise on 20th October Admiral Ohnishi summoned the twenty-four *Kamikaze* (divine wind) pilots and addressed them, his voice shaking with emotion: "Japan faces a terrible crisis. The salvation of our country is beyond the power of ministers, the General Staff and lowly unit commanders like myself. It is now up to spirited young men such as you." Tears came to his eyes as he concluded: "I ask you to do your utmost and wish you success."

Similar recruiting of *Kamikaze* pilots was taking place at other airfields. At Cebu, all hands assembled at 6 p.m. on 20th October. "Each volunteer for the 'special-attack' corps," said the commanding officer, "will write his name and rank on a piece of paper and insert it in an envelope and seal it. Enclose a blank paper if you do not wish to volunteer. You have three hours in which to give the matter serious consideration."

At nine o'clock sharp the senior petty-officer pilot delivered an envelope to the commander's quarters. Inside were more than twenty signed pieces of paper; only two were blank.

On 25th October the first successful *Kamikaze*-unit attack was carried out; six planes took off at dawn from Davao in southern Mindanao and damaged at least three enemy escort carriers.

That same morning Lieutenant Seki also led a successful attack from Mabalacat. One of the four escorting pilots gave a report of the action: "Sighting an enemy force of four aircraft-carriers and six other ships, Lieutenant Seki dived headlong into

one of the carriers, which he rammed successfully. A colleague crashed into the same ship, from which there arose a great column of smoke. Successful hits were also scored by two more pilots, one on another carrier, the other on a light cruiser."

News of the *Kamikaze* successes flashed throughout the navy. A total of ninety-three fighters and fifty-seven bombers had been flown in conventional attacks that day, inflicting no damage on the enemy. The superiority of the suicide attacks was manifest.

Admiral Ohnishi was convinced that further employment of these inhuman tactics was unavoidable. He pressed this opinion on Vice-Admiral Fukudome, commander-in-chief of the 2nd Air Fleet: "Nothing short of all-out use of special attacks can save us. It is time for your air fleet to adopt these tactics."

Thus the *Kamikaze* tactics were given full play, and young men volunteered freely for the opportunity to add to the intensity of the "divine wind." Reinforcements poured out from the homeland eager to take their turn in crashing upon enemy warships.

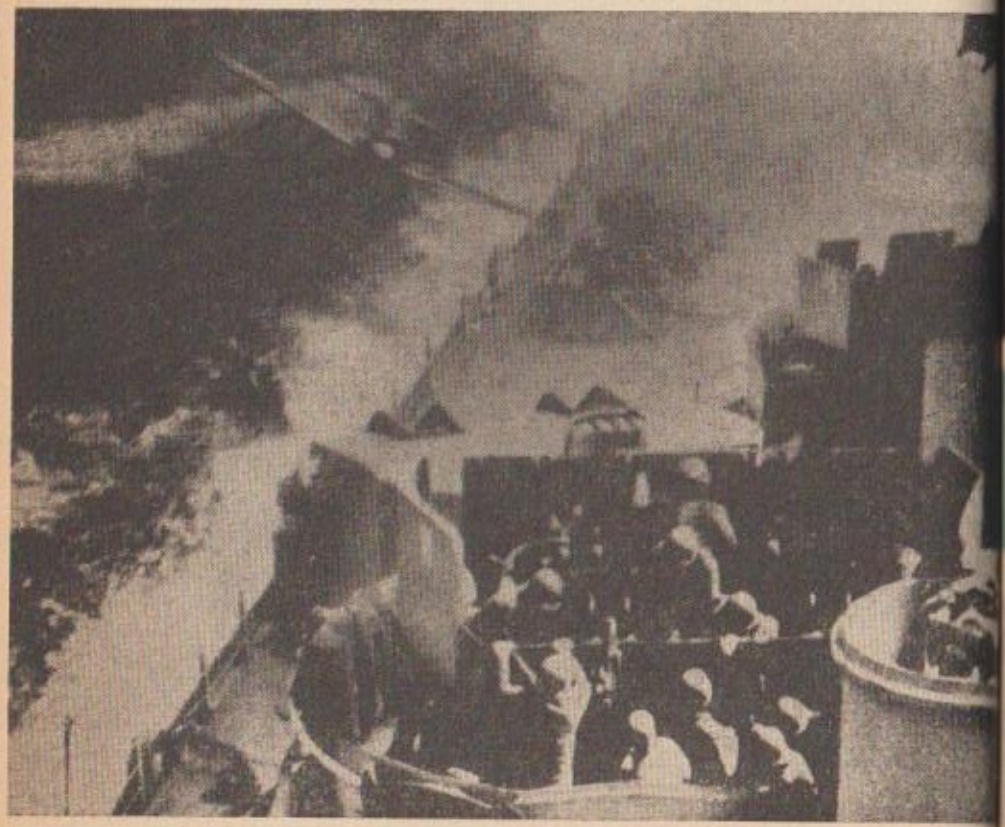
But time was running out. As the tempo of the enemy invasion increased, so did the intensity and number of *Kamikaze* attacks. But the supply of planes was dwindling, and on 5th January the last large-scale suicide attack from a Philippine base was launched. Fifteen fighter-bombers struck the invasion forces at Lingayen Gulf, damaging one cruiser and four transports.*

More Japanese defeats soon followed the fall of the Philippines. The Allies invaded Iwo Jima in February 1945 and Okinawa in April, seizing Japan in a death-grip. This inspired *Kamikaze* tactics on an unprecedented scale—even training planes were mobilized.

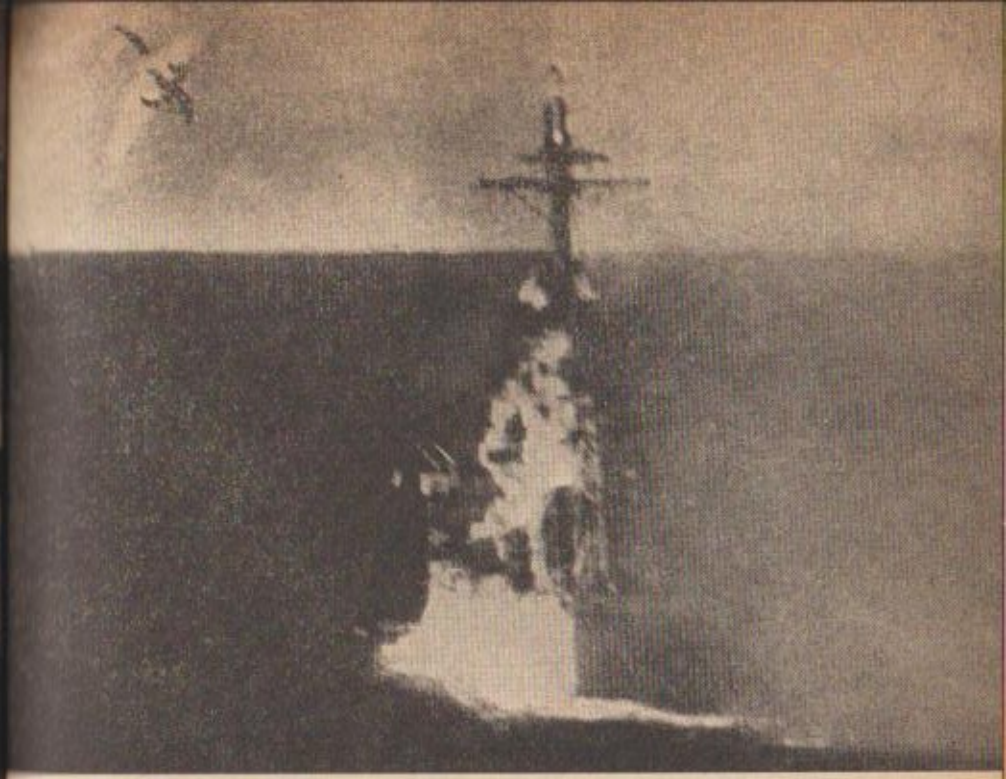
Now a new suicide weapon was proposed. A rocket-powered 1,800-kilogram missile would be attached to a "mother" bomber. Within sight of the target the missile would be released, with a

* American Navy accounts of the battle of Lingayen Gulf show that the *Kamikaze* attacks were apparently more effective than the Japanese themselves realized. Not one but two cruisers were damaged, as well as an escort carrier and a destroyer. The threat was so great that US carriers which had planned to attack Formosa on 7th January were retained to continue the attack at Luzon.

To the cheers of his comrades, a *Kamikaze* pilot prepares to take off in a bomb-laden Zero aircraft for his last mission



A Zero roars in at deck height for its suicidal attack on a US warship



With all guns blazing, a US warship tries desperately to explode a *Kamikaze* raider in the air

One that failed; a twin-engined suicide plane crashes into the sea

suicide pilot to crash it on an enemy ship. The pilots trained for this weapon were called *Jinrai Butai* (divine thunderbolt unit). "Baka (foolish) Bomb" was the name it earned from the Allies.

Baka Bombs were used in the big attack on Okinawa on 12th April. The pilot of the first missile to score a hit was remarkably composed. In his non-flying hours he was supervisor of a junior officers' billet. His last words before climbing into the mother bomber were: "Keep an eye out for the new straw mats I ordered for the billet." He slept during the flight towards Okinawa and had to be roused when it was time to start his flight to eternity.

In the Okinawa campaign alone there were more than 1,800 suicide flights. By the time Japan surrendered, a total of 2,519 men and officers of the Imperial Japanese Navy had sacrificed themselves.

A few hours after the Imperial proclamation of 15th August 1945, calling for the immediate cessation of the war, the 5th Air Fleet commander, Admiral Ugaki, chose the same death he had ordered for so many of his pilots. He stripped the insignia of rank from his uniform and spoke to his assembled officers and men: "I am going to take off for a crash attack upon the enemy at Okinawa. Those who wish to follow me are requested to raise their hands."

There were more volunteers than there were planes available. Of the eleven planes that took off, seven—including Admiral Ugaki's—radioed that they were "diving on target."

That evening Admiral Ohnishi, who was now vice-chief of the Naval General Staff in Tokyo, penned a note: "To the souls of my late subordinates I express my great appreciation for their valiant deeds. In death I wish to apologize to these brave men and their families." Then he plunged a *samurai* sword into his abdomen.

Refusing medical aid or a *coup de grâce*, Admiral Ohnishi lingered on in agony until six o'clock the following evening. His choice to endure prolonged suffering was obviously made in expiation for his part in the most diabolical tactic of war the world has ever seen.

Condensed from United States Naval Institute Proceedings

The Man with The Miraculous Hands

A condensation of the book, "The Magic Touch"

By Joseph Kessel

The miraculous hands were those of Dr. Felix Kersten, a gifted manual therapist who came to have amazing power over Heinrich Himmler, one of the most dreaded Nazi figures. Kersten used his strange influence over Himmler to snatch his patient's victims from extermination in concentration camps and gas chambers. "No man's story would seem at first sight less credible," says Hugh Trevor-Roper, the well-known authority on Nazi Germany. "But no man's story has undergone a more searching scrutiny . . . and it has emerged triumphant"

The Man with the Miraculous Hands

EXCEPT FOR its immense size, No. 8 Prinz Albrecht Strasse did not differ outwardly from other public buildings in pre-war Berlin. It was heavy and grey, and over it floated the usual swastika flags. But this dull-looking structure was guarded night and day by sentries as stiff as robots, and when people walked by it they quickened their steps and carefully averted their eyes. For this was the general headquarters of Heinrich Himmler, head of the Schutzstaffel (SS—the Elite Corps), lord of the Gestapo, the most dreaded man in all Germany.

One afternoon in March 1939 a luxurious, chauffeur-driven limousine drew up at this address. The podgy forty-year-old civilian who stepped out of it approached the building and, apparently unaware of its sinister character, asked to see Reichsfuehrer Himmler in person. ("Reichsfuehrer" was a designation that Hitler had specially coined for this important Nazi.)

The soldier took the visitor's name and hurried inside. Soon an officer appeared, wearing the black-shirted uniform of the SS. Extending his arm in the stiff Nazi salute he barked, "Heil Hitler!"

The rosy-cheeked stranger lifted his hat politely and answered, "Good day, Lieutenant."

"Follow me," the officer said. He was most respectful and, as the doors closed after the two men, the sentries exchanged glances of amazement. This visitor had nothing in common with those who

usually appeared here: SS officers, policemen, secret agents, informers, suspects called up for interrogation. He showed neither arrogance, nor fear, nor servility. He was simply a well-fed, solid-looking citizen. Most unusual.

Inside, the officer led the visitor through halls crowded with soldiers, up two enormous staircases and down a long corridor. Before he could knock, a door flew open to reveal Himmler himself waiting for them. A slight, narrow-shouldered man with a wispy moustache, he wore the uniform of an SS general. Steel-rimmed spectacles framed eyes of deep grey, and he had prominent cheekbones set in a face the colour of bees-wax. With a bony hand he seized the visitor's plump fingers and drew him into the room.

"Thank you for coming, Doctor. I have heard a great deal about you. Perhaps you will be able to relieve these excruciating stomach pains which permit me neither to walk nor to sit." His unpleasant face became even more waxen as he went on, "Not a single doctor in Germany has succeeded. But I have been assured that you obtain results where others fail. Do you think you can help me?"

Without answering, Dr. Felix Kersten studied the Mongoloid cheekbones, the sparse hair, the receding chin. This was the head that had conceived and carried out measures which were a source of terror to Germans, and of horror to all civilized men—the round-ups, the concentration camps, the mass exterminations.

But in those livid and flabby features Kersten also recognized the familiar appeal of suffering human flesh. He looked round the room. It was soberly furnished: a large desk covered with papers, a few chairs and a long divan. "Will you please strip to the waist and stretch out flat on your back, Herr Reichsfuehrer?" he asked.

Himmler hastened to comply. Kersten drew up a chair and placed his hands on the outstretched body. They were large, thick hands, but each finger had, under a short nail, a sort of swelling, much fleshier than normal. As the hands began to move, the doctor's plump face underwent an extraordinary change. The lines disappeared; the flesh lost its heaviness, and the mouth its

sensual look. At last his eyes closed; the solid Flemish burgomaster he resembled seemed to have become the figure of a Buddha.

The fingers skimmed lightly, and almost imperceptibly, over Himmler's throat, chest, heart and stomach. Then they began to stop at certain spots, to press down, to seek, to listen. . . .

Suddenly Himmler gave a cry. The fingers, so light and velvety, had just pressed brutally on a spot in his stomach from which pain burst like a wave of fire. "Very good. Hold still," Kersten said softly. Another tongue of pain raced through Himmler's intestines. Then another and another. He groaned and chewed his lips; his brow was wet with perspiration.

"That is very painful, isn't it?" Kersten asked.

"Terribly so," Himmler answered between clenched teeth.

At last Kersten rested his hands on his knees and opened his eyes. "I see," he said. "It is the stomach, of course, but especially the related nervous system. Nothing is more painful than that."

"Can you help me?" Himmler asked. The lustreless face seemed to beg for relief.

"We shall find that out right away," Kersten said.

This time he did not grope. He thrust his fingers deep into his patient's stomach, seized a roll of flesh and squeezed it, kneaded it, twisted it. At every movement, Himmler started with pain.

After several minutes Kersten dropped his arms, and his body slackened like a boxer's between rounds. "That will do for the first time," he said. "How do you feel?"

The Reichsfuehrer paused before answering. He seemed almost to be listening to what was taking place in his body. Finally, he said hesitantly, "I feel . . . yes, it's amazing . . . I feel better."

He raised his body gingerly, obviously terrified of the consequences of movement. But the unbearable pain did not return.

"No medicine works," he exclaimed. "Not even morphine. And now, in a few minutes—I would never have believed it! Doctor, I want to keep you near me. I will have you registered at once in the SS with the rank of colonel."

Kersten started uneasily as he contemplated this fantastic offer. But he answered gravely: "Herr Reichsfuehrer, I am only too sensible of the honour you do me. But unfortunately it is impossible for me to accept it." He went on to explain that he lived in Holland, that he had a home there, a family, an established routine and a great many patients. "But," he said, "should you have need of me, I will return. And I'll be in Berlin for the next two weeks to see my patients here."

"Then include me among them, Doctor. Come every day, I beg you." Decisively Himmler pressed a buzzer on his desk. An *aide* entered and saluted. "Doctor Kersten is always welcome here," Himmler told him. "Let it be known by everyone."

Every morning for the next two weeks Kersten treated Himmler at No. 8 Prinz Albrecht Strasse. It was not a task he undertook willingly. He would not have been there at all except for one of his oldest patients, and a dear friend as well. August Diehn, a German industrialist with large holdings, had come to Kersten late in 1938 with the request, "Will you examine Himmler?" Kersten had refused point-blank. "I have avoided the Nazis up to now, and I have no intention of starting with the worst of them," he said.

Diehn had continued with visible effort. "I have never before asked you to do anything for me, Doctor. But now I am going to have to insist, for others' sake as well as my own. Himmler is planning to nationalize the potash industry, and I will be one of his first targets. I know from my own experience the influence you have on your patients when you relieve their suffering. You can see, then. . . ." He had broken off, ashamed.

So Kersten had agreed. It was a fateful decision. Hundreds of thousands were to owe their lives to it.

FELIX KERSTEN was not really a doctor. He was, in the ordinary term, a masseur, but he was far from ordinary. Fate had endowed his hands with unusual skill.

He was born in 1898 in Estonia, but after the First World War he

became a Finnish citizen, and began his studies of massage in Helsinki. In Finland manual therapy is a very old science and a much respected art. One of the greatest specialists then in Helsinki, a Dr. Colander, came often to the hospital where Kersten was training. He recognized that the young man had a natural gift for massage and took him under his wing.

Two years of intensive study followed, and in 1921 Kersten was awarded his degree in scientific massage. Then he went to Berlin for further training. There, at a small dinner party one evening in 1922, he met a Dr. Ko.

Aged and wrinkled, Dr. Ko was Chinese but he had grown up in a Tibetan monastery, where he became a lama. From childhood he had been instructed in the arts of healing—above all, in the ancient and subtle art of massage. He had devoted twenty years to these studies, then come to the West, qualified as a doctor in Britain and set up practice first in London, later in Berlin. Despite his medical degree, he treated his patients solely by using massage as it had been taught to him in Tibet.

During dinner Dr. Ko became interested in the young student, and asked him home to display his Finnish techniques. After Kersten had given an ambitious demonstration, Dr. Ko regarded him with twinkling, half-shut eyes.

"My young friend," he said, "you know nothing, absolutely nothing. But I would like to take you on as a pupil."

For the next three years Kersten spent almost every working minute with the lama-doctor. Assisting him in his labours, he saw him perform some remarkable cures. Ko did not claim that his massage could cure everything; but its range was so great that it was beyond the dream of most practitioners.

According to the Tibetan science, as it was taught by Ko, the masseur's first duty was to ascertain the exact nature and source of the pain. He paid no attention to the patient's complaints; his only source of information was his finger-tips. Through them he could tell which tissues were enlarged, which nerves damaged.

Finally, in 1925, Ko said, "You have learned all I can teach you." He turned his patients over to Kersten, and returned to Tibet.

Overnight Kersten's material life was transformed. Always a penniless student, forced to take part-time jobs to support his studies, he now became wealthy. Influential patients flocked to him, and soon his reputation spread outside Germany. In 1928 he was called in to treat Prince Hendrik, husband of Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. He liked that country so much that he transferred his principal residence to The Hague; but he kept a flat in Berlin and acquired a magnificent estate outside the city as well.

He married, and his young wife, Irmgard, pampered him with the good food he loved so well. He worked at The Hague, in Berlin, in Rome. A son was born. His happiness seemed without flaw.

To be sure, about the time of his marriage, Hitler annexed Austria; and in the year his first son (one of three) was born, Hitler seized a piece of Czechoslovakia. But Kersten closed his eyes to these things. He barricaded himself behind the walls of his profession, his family, his happiness. How could he ever become involved in politics?

HIMMLER'S reaction to Kersten's ministrations was astonishing, even during the first two weeks. Given the most secret, sordid and brutal tasks, and living only among policemen, spies, fanatics and hangmen, he was normally ultra-suspicious. But now, soothed and softened by the doctor's hands, he became extraordinarily relaxed. Kersten stopped the massage every five minutes or so to give the nerves a chance to rest, and during these intervals the Reichsfuehrer began to talk.

At first he chatted about himself, about his illness. Then he lectured Kersten on the superiority of the German race and the glory of the SS, its purest essence. Himmler chose these soldiers himself, always on the same model: tall, athletic, fair-haired, blue-eyed. Eventually his talk would turn to Hitler, and then there was no stopping him. Hitler was to him a genius such as appeared

only once in 1,000 years. He was inspired, all-wise, all-powerful, a god. The German people had only to follow him blindly to reach the zenith of their history.

Kersten made no reply to these speeches. He hoped to avoid any political involvement, and tried to regard Himmler as just another patient. But one day he was jarred abruptly when Himmler, relaxing on the couch, said calmly, "We will soon be at war. . . ."

"War!" Kersten exclaimed involuntarily. "Good heavens! Why?"

Himmler propped himself on his elbows, and his voice rose in excitement. "There will be a war because Hitler wants one. War makes men stronger and more virile!"

He lay down again and spoke more calmly, reassuringly: "Anyway, it will be a little war—short, easy, victorious. The democracies are rotten at the core. They will soon be brought to their knees."

When Kersten returned to Holland, Himmler was without pain. The Reichsfuehrer's good-byes were full of emotion and gratitude. He seemed to look on the doctor as a sort of magician, a sorcerer.

It was almost three months before Kersten came back to Berlin. By then Himmler needed him badly, and their sessions began once more. Again the talk was of the war Hitler wanted. Already he had seized what remained of Czechoslovakia, but the democracies had shied away from general conflict. "The world cannot know real peace until it has been purified by war," Himmler ranted.

Little by little Kersten began to answer him. He did not want Himmler to interpret his silence as an approval. War was an outrage against humanity, he would repeat. Himmler had only one reply: "The Fuehrer says. . . ."

That autumn, when Hitler secured his war by attacking Poland (and Britain and France belied Himmler's predictions by entering the conflict), Kersten found himself in a difficult position. In October, after responding to an urgent request from Himmler, the doctor decided to consult the Finnish Embassy before he returned to Holland. Though he rarely visited Finland now, he was still a Finnish citizen and an officer in her reserve force.

He now met several Finnish diplomats and told them that for several months he had been treating Himmler. He mentioned that while under treatment Himmler had a tendency to indulge in confidences, some of them of possible military and political significance. Should he continue to treat him?

"Do not hesitate for a moment," he was told. "It is your *duty* to treat Himmler. Maintain and improve this confidence he shows in you. And keep us informed. It is of vital importance."

Kersten promised to do his best.

BY MAY 1940 Kersten's situation had become extremely difficult. His native country, Estonia, had been annexed by Russia, against whom he had fought in 1919. There he faced death for treason.

Holland, where he had his legal residence, had been invaded by Hitler's troops, and the Dutch Nazis were out to get him. They felt he had been too close to Queen Wilhelmina's court. His adopted country, Finland, was closed to him, since its highest authorities had ordered him to continue treating Himmler. In Germany, his freedom of movement was more and more restricted. During the invasion of Holland he had been put under virtual house arrest on his estate outside Berlin. And in mid-May he was ordered, not invited, to accompany Himmler to the front in his private train.

The German armies were soon advancing through France with terrifying speed, and Himmler's private train was a veritable headquarters on wheels. Every department under him—the Gestapo, the SS, Intelligence, Counter-espionage, Control of Occupied Territories—had its rolling office. In the wake of this train came fear, hunger, torture and death.

To escape from this landscape of destruction, the doctor sought refuge in Himmler's small field library. There he made an astonishing discovery. All the books were on religion: the Vedas, the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Koran, critical works and commentaries, theological tracts, mystical writings and volumes on church government and law.

"Haven't you told me that a true Nazi can have no religion?" he asked Himmler one day.

"Of course," Himmler replied.

"Well?" Kersten asked, indicating the shelves of the makeshift library.

Himmler was amused. "I have not been converted," he said. "These books are necessary for my work." His face took on an exalted look, and Kersten knew he was about to pronounce the name of his idol. "Hitler has entrusted me with preparing the bible of the new Nazi religion."

"I don't understand," Kersten said.

"After the victory of the Third Reich," Himmler explained, "the Fuehrer will abolish Christianity and establish the Germanic faith on its ruins. We will preserve the idea of God, but it will be vague and indistinct. The Fuehrer will replace Christ as the saviour of humanity. Thus millions and millions of people will say only Hitler's name in their prayers, and 100 years from now nothing will be known but the new religion."

Kersten listened to this with bowed head, afraid to let Himmler glimpse his outraged expression. "You see, for this new bible I need documents," Himmler concluded.

In the mess-car, Himmler's officers each day celebrated France's death agonies with crude toasts to victory. Kersten, who was so fond of eating, could barely swallow a mouthful. His attitude was noticed, and the SS officers, already jealous of him, became increasingly hostile. "This strange doctor," they would whisper audibly, "this damned civilian, this Finn . . . he sees Himmler whenever he wants, while we must follow the strictest protocol."

Only one officer did not share the animosity. This was the second lieutenant who was Himmler's private secretary. Peace-loving, unpretentious Rudolf Brandt was, like Kersten, merely a stray civilian among the uniformed killers who filled the train. He was a doctor of law, and before the war he had been first clerk to the state. When Himmler asked his men to find him a secretary, they chose

Brandt. He had no sympathy for the Nazis, but he dared not refuse the post. He was soon enlisted in the SS, and his intelligence, education, quiet charm and great discretion quickly earned him the esteem and confidence of the Reichsfuehrer.

Brandt suffered from stomach trouble, and Himmler asked Kersten to treat him. Thus Brandt and Kersten were often thrown together. At first they were extremely cautious. But gradually they came to recognize each other for what they were: two lonely men who had not forgotten what it meant to be human.

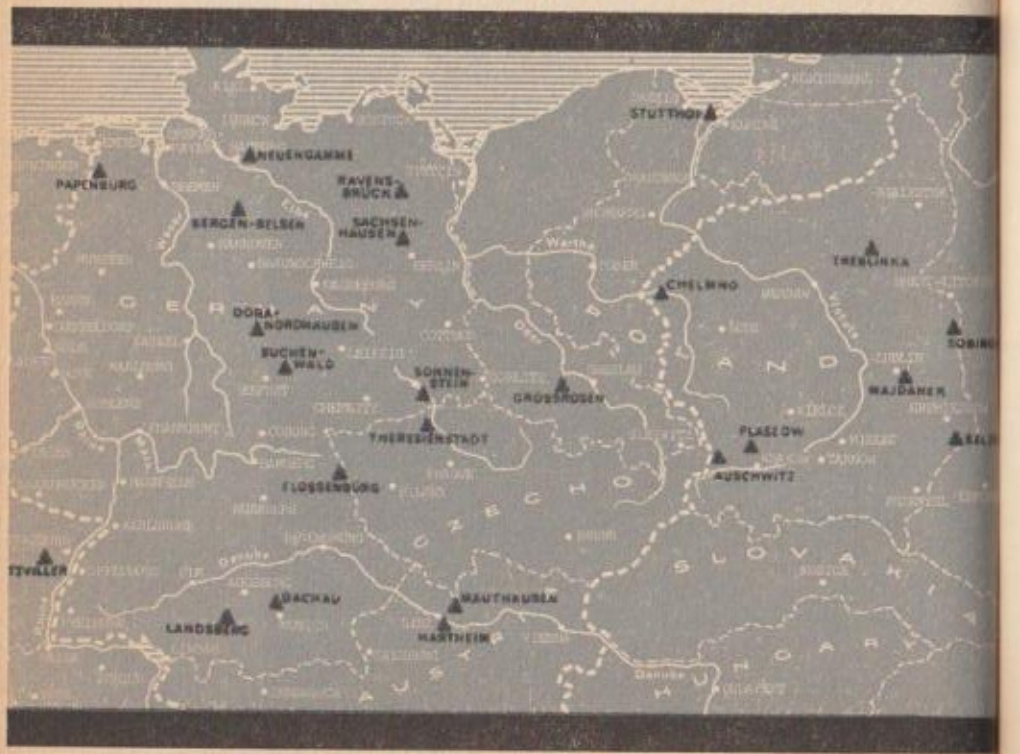
AFTER THE fall of France, Himmler came back to Berlin, and outwardly Kersten's life resumed its normal course. He returned to his flat, his comforts, his work—and he regained his appetite. He saw his friends and family again. And every week-end he found peace in the fields and trees of Hartzwalde, his opulent country estate.

Nothing seemed changed, but beneath his carefree manner lay a deep uneasiness. And late in August an incident occurred which was to set the pattern for his unique wartime service to mankind.

Himmler suffered an excruciating attack of cramp and summoned Kersten in desperate haste. Kersten rushed to No. 8 Prinz Albrecht Strasse and, as usual, quickly relieved the pain. But the attack had been so violent that Himmler remained lying down, regarding him with near veneration. "Dear Kersten," he said, "what would I do without you? I will never be able to express my gratitude. And I have a guilty conscience—I have never paid you anything."

Kersten realized instantly that if he agreed to let Himmler pay him, he would become just another ordinary salaried person in his employ; Himmler would be released from any sense of obligation. He also knew that Himmler had only a modest income. His fanaticism was so single-minded that, among the Nazi high-ups, he alone appropriated nothing for his own use from the secret funds at his disposal. On his official salary, which was little more than 2,000 marks a month, he supported his wife and daughter, as well as an ailing mistress and two illegitimate sons.

Himmler, Brandt and Kersten—they bargained for lives



Himmler's far-flung chain of concentration camps

Kersten put on his most amiable expression. "You know very well, Herr Reichsfuehrer, that I do not charge by the visit, but by the completed cure. Besides, I am much richer than you are."

"That doesn't matter. It is my duty to make you some compensation. You must tell me how much I owe you."

Kersten waved his hand good-naturedly. "Let's leave things as they are. Rest assured, when you are better off, I shall be merciless."

Himmler was now sitting up on the couch. Never had the doctor seen him so moved. "Dear, dear Kersten," he exclaimed, "how will I ever thank you!"

Suddenly Kersten remembered that an old patient, August Rosterg, had come to him two weeks before with a request. Although Rosterg was one of the most powerful businessmen in Germany, a foreman on his estate, an honest, peace-loving old man, had been thrown into a concentration camp. Since the man's sole crime was being a Social Democrat, Rosterg asked Kersten to use his influence with Himmler to get him out. Kersten had disclaimed any influence, and only Rosterg's insistence made him accept a memorandum on the case, which he had then buried in his portfolio and promptly forgotten.

Now he thought of it. Impulsively, he opened his portfolio and handed the memorandum to Himmler. "Here is my bill, Herr Reichsfuehrer," he said. "I want this man's freedom."

Himmler gave a start. He read the note. Then he said, "Because it is you who asks me, I agree."

He shouted, "Brandt!" His private secretary came in.

"Take this memorandum, and have this man released. Our good doctor wishes it."

"At once, Herr Reichsfuehrer," Brandt said.

He stood still for a moment, but he gave Kersten a brief look of approval. It was then that Kersten knew for certain that in Brandt he had a friend, a trustworthy ally against the Gestapo and the death camps. He was to need such a friend. For the victory he had won, in extracting a life from Himmler, was to define the course of an ever-widening battle.

ONCE RESTORED to health, Himmler was again fanatically inflexible—even with his doctor-magician. Three days after he had granted the foreman's release he asked Kersten dryly, "Is it true, as my agents in Holland tell me, that you have kept your house in The Hague?

"I have warned you repeatedly," he went on hotly, "that certain Dutch are gunning for you because you continue these connexions. I cannot cover for you any longer. You must get rid of that house."

He allowed Kersten ten days for the task, but stipulated that he must report daily to Gestapo headquarters in Holland. "It's a matter of courtesy," he told the doctor, although actually he was placing him under strict surveillance.

When he arrived in Holland, Kersten quickly learned how nightmarish the German occupation was, as friends flocked to tell him of arrests, deportations, torture and executions. It was infinitely depressing, the more so because he could do nothing about it.

One day he did try to help. He had been in The Hague for five days when an early-morning report of a Gestapo raid roused him from bed and, after a hasty investigation, sent him rushing to Gestapo headquarters. Walther Rauter, the Gestapo chief in Holland, was not surprised to see him, since Kersten reported to him every day. This time, however, after observing the usual ritual, Kersten said, "I tried to visit my friend Bignell earlier. The police were searching his house, and I was not permitted to enter."

"They were acting on my orders," said Rauter, glaring at Kersten. "Bignell is a traitor, in communication with London. After the search of his house, he will go to prison where I"—Rauter smiled icily—"will interrogate him."

Kersten's friend Bignell was an art dealer from whom he had bought several fine Flemish oil paintings. He was of advanced years and in poor health, and the thought of what was in store made Kersten shudder. On a sudden impulse, he said, "I guarantee his innocence. He has done nothing against Germany; free him."

A look of disbelief passed over Rauter's face. What! A foreigner,

a suspect under daily surveillance, was daring to give him orders!

"Free that swine?" he shouted, banging the table with his fist. "Under no circumstances. Least of all because *you* say so."

Kersten had promised himself he would remain calm. But anger breeds anger, and in his rage an idea came to him that he would normally have dismissed as insane. "You have a telephone?" he asked coldly. "Get me Himmler."

Rauter was taken aback. He leaped from his chair. "That is impossible. Even for me. When I want to talk to Himmler, I have to go through Reinhard Heydrich, the head of all the services."

"Try it," Kersten insisted. "We shall see."

Rauter picked up the telephone, transmitted Kersten's request, then pretended to be engrossed in the papers on his desk. Within five minutes the phone rang. Rauter lifted the receiver with an ominous grin. Then a look of terror came over his face as he thrust the instrument at the doctor. Himmler was on the line.

The wait had given Kersten time to reflect, and he would gladly have retracted his rash request. He knew that Himmler was rigidly determined to protect the heads of his various services. But retreat was not possible now. "One of my best friends has just been arrested," he said to Himmler. "I guarantee his innocence. Do me a favour, Herr Reichsfuehrer, and let his case drop."

At the other end, Himmler seemed not to have heard. In a feverish voice he asked, "When are you coming back? I need you desperately."

Kersten almost fainted with relief. Luck was with him. Himmler in pain, Himmler calling his healer to the rescue, was no longer the fanatical bureaucrat, the lord of torture and extermination. Instead, he was the addict prepared to do anything for his drug.

"I have not finished here," Kersten said. "And if my friend is arrested, I will be in no condition to help anyone."

"Put Rauter on—quickly!" Himmler commanded.

The Gestapo chief took the phone. He stood at attention, heels together, head and shoulders rigid, face frozen. All Kersten heard was, "Very good, Herr Reichsfuehrer! At once, Herr Reichsfuehrer!"

Then Rauter handed the phone to Kersten again, and Himmler said, "I trust you. Your friend will be freed. But come back, come back as soon as possible."

In the long silence that followed, Rauter and Kersten looked at each other vacantly. They were equally stunned.

The first Gestapo victim Kersten had saved had been a unique case. Kersten had, in effect, exchanged his whole medical fee for the liberty of one man. A man, moreover, guilty of nothing except belonging to the wrong political party. What a difference here! Bignell was accused of high treason by the head of the Gestapo for all Holland. Yet a word from Kersten had been enough to free him.

The doctor passed a hand slowly over his forehead. He felt slightly dizzy. Just how far did his new-found power extend?

DURING THE months that followed, Kersten received a steady flow of information from Holland, details concerning unwarranted imprisonments, flagrant thefts, unfair punishments. The letters came to him in the safest possible way, for they were addressed to Himmler's own postal number, and were sorted out by Brandt and handed to Kersten unopened.

This unusual privilege was obtained easily, as is often true of unlikely successes. With feigned embarrassment, Kersten had confided, first to Rudolf Brandt, then to Himmler himself, that in Holland there were several women with whom he had had affairs. When they wrote to him, it pained him to think that the censor would read the letters.

Brandt had suggested using Himmler's private address, and surprisingly Himmler had readily agreed. Himmler liked to think of himself in terms of the ideal Germanic superman—athletic, warlike, a great eater and drinker, and a great lover. The facts were painfully different, but he tried to forget this. Hence, Kersten's request delighted him. It changed their doctor-patient relationship, made them man-to-man conspirators, accomplices in virility.

Thus the "love letters" from Holland flowed in and, although it

was naturally impossible to intervene in every case of injustice and suffering they revealed, Kersten selected from the dreadful lists individual cases that moved him. And these he mentioned to Himmler at propitious moments.

Gradually he evolved a whole technique for his petitions. When Himmler's illness was acute and only Kersten's hands could relieve him, the doctor could sometimes request a pardon, a release from prison or the cancellation of a decree. But such opportunities were rare. Once the crisis was over, Kersten lost his power. Then he had to appeal to the Reichsfuehrer's vanity, which was boundless.

Just as he worshipped the superman of the future, Himmler also revered German heroes of the past, such as Frederick Barbarossa and Henry the Fowler. So Kersten would tell him, persuasively: "In centuries to come you will be called the greatest leader of the German people, the equal of the old chevaliers. But remember that these men did not owe their fame to force and courage alone; they were also just and generous. For your reputation in the future, Herr Reichsfuehrer, you must be equally magnanimous."

Himmler believed this flattery. "My dear Doctor Kersten," he would say, "you are my only friend, the only one who both understands and helps me." He would order Brandt to draw up a list of the names designated by Kersten, and he would sign a decree of liberation. And often, when there was still space above the signature, Brandt would secretly add two or three more names.

The very number of these rescues became a source of danger. For the Gestapo chiefs, the inquisitors, the executioners, could hardly fail to wonder what was causing Himmler to pardon all these people. He had always asked of them an implacable unrelenting fury in persecution and terror. Why the change? Sooner or later, Kersten knew, they must trace the responsibility to him.

FOR A LONG time Kersten was left alone. Then, early one morning in January 1941, two Gestapo men came to his Berlin flat.

"We wish to speak to you," one of them said curtly.

Kersten, still clad in pyjamas, led them into his study. Had one of his friends in Holland betrayed him, he wondered, and confessed to using Himmler's postal number? Or had they discovered that Brandt was adding names to Himmler's pardon lists, at his instigation? In either case, he was done for.

In the study one of the officers began by asking, "Have you any Jewish patients?"

"Of course," Kersten said, much relieved that their questioning took this turn.

"You do not realize then, that it is absolutely forbidden for a German doctor to treat Jews?"

"I am not a German doctor," Kersten said politely. "I am a Finnish citizen."

Kersten produced his passport, and with this undeniable proof in their hands the two police officers suddenly became almost apologetic. As abruptly as the interrogation had begun, it ended.

Afterwards Kersten speculated on the purpose of the visit. Had the officers actually thought him German? No, the Gestapo knew all about him. They had only to go to the Finnish Embassy to check on him. What was the object then? Warning? Intimidation? Blackmail?

When he told Himmler about the visit, the Reichsfuehrer at once seized the telephone and barked a number. Then, his face pale with anger, he shouted, "I forbid anyone to interfere with Doctor Kersten, for any reason whatsoever. This is an order. The doctor is responsible to me and me alone."

But shortly afterwards Rudolf Brandt warned the doctor to be on his guard against Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Gestapo, a man who stood just below Himmler in the hierarchy of terror. Recently Heydrich had told his colleagues that he suspected Kersten of being an enemy agent, or at least of using his power over Himmler on behalf of Germany's foes. Heydrich had assured them he would soon be able to furnish proof of this.

One day towards the end of February 1941, as Kersten was

leaving Himmler's office, he found himself face to face with Heydrich, who said civilly, "I would very much like to have a chat with you, Doctor."

"Whenever you like," answered Kersten amiably. "Today, if it is convenient."

They agreed to meet that evening in the Gestapo offices. In the half-hour interview, Heydrich blandly let Kersten understand, without ever saying it outright, that the Gestapo was aware of his extensive information service from Holland and Finland.

"Do you know, Doctor," he said, "that we could really be very useful to you? When people ask you to intervene for them with the Reichsfuehrer, it is your duty, is it not, to form an objective opinion about them? We shall be happy to undertake for you the research of their social and political status, their character, resources and so on. And please note that you would be entirely free to make up your own mind as to the veracity of our information and to use it as you see fit."

Actually, all Heydrich's talk had but one purpose: to get Kersten to reveal the names of his correspondents in Holland and Finland.

When Kersten thanked him cordially, but non-committally, the Gestapo chief appeared satisfied. But Rudolf Brandt was much concerned when the doctor repeated this conversation to him.

"Please, I beseech you, redouble your precautions," Brandt urged.

"Don't worry, I have already decided to do so," said Kersten.

A few days later, however, he was forced to abandon all caution.

On 1st March 1941, Kersten arrived at No. 8 Prinz Albrecht Strasse at noon, the regular hour for his visits, but found Himmler detained in an important meeting. As usual, he decided to wait for him in the staff mess-hall.

Not one head was raised as he crossed the large, crowded room, though it buzzed with unfriendly voices. Ignoring the general hostility, Kersten found a corner seat. The non-commissioned officer who managed the mess-hall soon came over with a cup of

very strong coffee, heavily sweetened, and the richest cakes he could find. He knew the doctor's tastes, and had orders to give him the best possible service.

Kersten was contentedly enjoying this snack when he became aware of a commotion. Looking up, he saw that Walther Rauter and Reinhard Heydrich had just entered the room, to a flurry of salutes, and were coming his way. They took a table near by, but neither noticed him, for they were lost in conversation. Kersten tried to shrink his great bulk and hide his face, though he made an intense effort to hear what they were saying. Rauter was speaking.

"What a surprise those Dutch pigs are in for. Only this week they stoned two of my men. Filthy swine! At last they'll get what's coming to them."

"It's cold enough in Poland to cool them off," said Heydrich with a laugh.

Kersten bent farther over his cakes and coffee, but he felt as if his ears were standing out at right angles to his head.

"I have just received my directives for the deportation," Heydrich went on. "You will have the working plans shortly, and then there won't be a day to lose."

"What is the date?" asked Rauter eagerly.

At this point, Heydrich lowered his voice, and Kersten could make out nothing more. But what he had heard was enough to tell him that Holland now faced a new and sinister ordeal. It required great effort for him to leave calmly and, during the treatment hour with Himmler, to behave as if nothing had happened.

That afternoon Kersten telephoned Brandt to ask if he could see him alone. Brandt agreed to meet him that evening at six o'clock in his office. There Kersten repeated exactly what he had overheard in the mess-hall. "What's going on?" he asked.

Brandt paused for a moment, then locked the door. "If anybody should come," he said, "I will say you are giving me treatment."

He went to a table covered with papers arranged in neat piles. There he drew out an envelope labelled "Top Secret."

"I have told you nothing, you have seen nothing," he whispered. "For God's sake, don't forget." He went to a window and looked out while Kersten sank into a chair and began to read.

The document was formal and precise. Because the Dutch were of Germanic blood, they were guilty not only of resistance, but of treason. Therefore, Adolf Hitler, Fuehrer of Greater Germany, had authorized Heinrich Himmler to carry out their mass deportation to the province of Lublin in Poland. Three million men would be sent on foot; their families would travel by ship and rail.

As he finished reading, Kersten's hands were trembling. He could picture the exodus: the men in endless columns, pistol-whipped and beaten, shoes and clothing tattered, with all Europe to cross; the women and children packed into cargo holds and goods wagons, dying of thirst, asphyxiated by the lack of air and the stench of their own wastes. It was a panorama of hell.

"It is horrible," Brandt said, turning from the window. "A whole nation to be sent into slavery!"

THE NEXT day at noon Kersten was again at No. 8 Prinz Albrecht Strasse. He had spent a sleepless, anguished night, but he had finally decided to speak of the deportation, although his very knowledge of the plan might mean death.

Once again Himmler was stretched out on his couch, his eyes closed in relaxation. Gently Kersten pressed on the nerve centre which he knew to be the most vulnerable, and asked in a normal voice, "What is the date you plan to start deporting the Dutch?"

As if hypnotized, Himmler answered, "The 20th of April, Hitler's birthday. It is to be a present."

Then an intense silence fell over the room, and suddenly Himmler sat upright and thrust his face close to Kersten's. "Where did you get this information?" he demanded.

Kersten explained that he had overheard Rauter and Heydrich discussing it in the mess-hall.

"The babbling idiots!" Himmler screamed. But his face showed

how relieved he was to find his doctor innocent. "It is important that I know how indiscreet they are. Thank you for telling me." He lay down again. Kersten had passed the moment of mortal danger. Himmler had accepted the fact that he knew of the deportation.

The doctor resumed his massage, and after a while he said gravely, "This deportation is the greatest mistake of your career."

Himmler did not stir. "You know nothing about politics," he said. "The Fuehrer's plan is sheer genius. Listen to how brilliant it is. We have taken Poland, but the Poles hate us; we need Germanic blood there. In spite of their treason, the Dutch are Germanic, and in Poland they will learn to change their attitude to us. The Poles will treat them as enemies for taking their land. Lost among the Slavs, the Dutch will turn to us as protectors. As for Holland, we will fill it with young German peasants. Admit it, is it not sheer genius?"

"Possibly," Kersten said dryly. "I was thinking only of your health. Several days ago you told me that, in addition to your regular duties, overwhelming in themselves, Hitler has ordered you to bring the SS up to a million before the summer—and they are scarcely 100,000 now. In three months you must select, clothe, arm and train 900,000 soldiers. Do you propose to add the deportation to this enormous load of work?"

"I have no choice. It is a personal order from the Fuehrer."

"Answer me frankly," Kersten said, "as patient to doctor. Of the two plans, which is the more important? Raising the SS forces to a million, or deporting the Dutch?"

"The SS, without doubt."

"Then you must postpone the deportation until victory. I am incapable of giving you enough strength to do both jobs at once."

"Impossible," said Himmler. "The deportation cannot be put off. Hitler wishes it now."

The treatment was over. Once again Himmler was invulnerable. But Kersten had never expected to defeat him in one round. All was not yet lost. Suddenly a terrible thought struck him. If, by some miracle, Himmler should give up the deportation of the Dutch,

would not the job be given to Heydrich or some other high official over whom Kersten would have no influence.

"Are you the only man capable of organizing the deportation?" he asked anxiously. "Why not look for someone else?"

Himmler brought his palm down on a table and cried, "For a mission of this importance, the Fuehrer trusts only me! No one else could do it. No one else will be permitted!"

IN THE following weeks, Himmler did not yield one iota. In vain the doctor tried flattery, appeals to his gratitude, threats to his health. Nothing worked. This time, shielding Himmler from Kersten's influence was another and greater authority: that of Hitler, his master, his god.

"The deportation will take place on the appointed day," repeated Himmler. And time was running out.

Then, towards the end of March, a strange thing happened. For the first time for two years, Kersten's treatments ceased to be effective. Whether he did it deliberately, or it happened because, as he said later, his skill was paralysed by his own anxiety, the miraculous hands were suddenly incapable of assuaging Himmler's pain. The Reichsfuehrer was in agony.

"I warned you," said Kersten, "that you cannot carry both loads simultaneously. Your nervous system no longer obeys me. Renounce the lesser of your two missions, and I guarantee I can cure your pain."

"Impossible," Himmler almost sobbed. "You must try, try again."

"I will try," said Kersten, "but I am sure it will be useless." And so it was.

Early in April 1941, German troops attacked Yugoslavia. To be in at the death, Hitler set up headquarters near the Yugoslav border, and Himmler had to go with him. The trip almost killed him. He never left his bed in his private train except to see Hitler, and Kersten was on call day and night. Each session—there were now ten a day—was a new contest, a new battle for the same object.

"You are mad, Herr Reichsfuehrer," Kersten said over and over again. "You see for yourself that you cannot do everything at once. Postpone the deportation."

On Himmler's pinched face, cold sweat mingled with tears. But he still gasped, "I cannot. I owe everything to my Fuehrer."

At two o'clock one morning, just a week before the deportation was due to take place, Kersten was summoned to Himmler's bedside. The violence of the patient's agony was indescribable. He lay as if crucified, panting brokenly, "I cannot breathe. Please help me!"

Kersten brought a chair to Himmler's bedside and, in an affectionate, almost imploring tone, said, "Herr Reichsfuehrer, I am your friend. I want to help you. But I beg of you, put off this Dutch thing until later. Remember how effective the treatments were before this matter came up? It will be like that again, if only you will go to Hitler and ask him to postpone the deportation."

Himmler seized one of the doctor's hands. "Yes, yes, dear Kersten, I really believe you are right. But what am I to say to the Fuehrer?"

"Tell him you cannot meet both responsibilities at once. Mention the lack of ships, the crowded roads. Point out that this load of work threatens both your health and the completion of the SS job."

"It's true. You are right," cried Himmler. "I will talk to Hitler—only give me the strength."

Kersten was inspired, confident of success. And once again Himmler began to find solace from the doctor's magic hands. From time to time he murmured, "I think ... yes, the pain is going away."

Kersten worked in silence. When he had finished, Himmler, moving slowly, got up, breathed deeply, and cried, "I am better. The pain has completely gone."

"Only because you have decided to talk to Hitler. You must do so at once."

Just then the phone rang. Himmler answered it, and listened without speaking. When he hung up, he turned to Kersten and said, "Yugoslavia is ours. The Fuehrer has just left for Berlin and

orders me to follow at once. My train is almost ready to depart."

He had recovered his authority, and Kersten was afraid he had cured him too quickly. But luck was with him. During the trip Himmler's cramp returned in full force, and this time Kersten prolonged the treatment so that his patient was almost helpless until the train reached Berlin.

"You see how much longer it takes?" Kersten asked. "You still have the deportation on your mind. You must free yourself of it."

"Rest assured, dear Kersten, I understand," Himmler said.

He drove straight from the station to Hitler. Two hours later he telephoned Kersten. "The Fuehrer is as generous as he is clever," he said. "The deportation is postponed. I have it in writing."

HIMMLER never once suspected Kersten's motives in protesting against the Dutch deportation as being other than those of a doctor and friend. But Heydrich was less credulous.

One day Kersten was summoned by the Gestapo chief. Himmler and Brandt had left unexpectedly for Munich, but Kersten stopped at Himmler's office and told the SS man on duty: "Please inform the Reichsfuehrer by telephone that in a few moments I have to be in Herr Heydrich's office. It is important. Do it without fail."

When Kersten reported to Heydrich, he found him as courteous as usual. But after a great deal of conversational sparring, Heydrich said, without changing his tone or his smile, "I am sorry, but I have to arrest you. I am sure it was you who influenced Himmler in the matter of the Dutch deportation."

"That's really giving me too much importance," Kersten said. "You flatter me."

Heydrich leaned back slightly, passed his well-manicured hand through his sleek fair hair, and said, "No one will be able to convince me that a doctor who practised at the Dutch court is a friend of ours. I would like to know who sent you to Germany."

"Himmler can answer you better than I," Kersten said.

In a neighbouring office the telephone rang. Heydrich went to

answer it. Left alone, Kersten listened anxiously. Was it Himmler calling? He could not hear anything.

Heydrich came back, sat down again, lit a cigarette and smiled.

"Where were we—oh, yes—Holland. I am amazed that you know so much about what's going on there. Don't you want to tell me about your sources of information?"

Kersten hid his fear in laughter. "Perhaps I'm clairvoyant," he joked nervously.

"Perhaps I am, too," Heydrich said. "I am even beginning to guess who you are. Soon I shall prove it." His eyes fixed on the doctor with merciless determination.

Heydrich got up and said, "You are free. Himmler has just telephoned me. He is ready to answer for your loyalty, and I have been explicitly ordered to let you go. But be ready to come back here. Don't worry, we will see each other again."

They never did.

In September 1941 Heydrich was sent to Bohemia to do a special job, and was killed in Prague on 4th June 1942, by Czech patriots. Ernst Kaltenbrunner replaced him as head of the Gestapo.

ON 21ST JUNE 1941, when Hitler took the ultimate gamble and threw all his forces against Russia, Himmler's train started for the eastern border. The Reichsfuehrer required Kersten to be on it.

Mobile headquarters were set up in East Prussia. Each day, as soon as the train was parked on its allotted siding, Himmler's men went to work: spying, making arrests, setting up concentration camps, carrying out summary executions. Himmler saw Hitler every night at the Fuehrer's headquarters, which were never very far away.

Dr. Kersten, who ate in the mess-car with Himmler's staff, found these officers intoxicated by the first successes against the Russians. They were sure that they would achieve an overwhelming victory, and saw the great Reich reaching the Ural Mountains. Repeating assurances which they had from Himmler, who in turn had them from Hitler, they were already dividing the spoils of the huge

country. "Each German soldier," they declared "will have property in Russia. It will be Germany's paradise."

For three months the rapid German advance gave Himmler more work every day, and he was in too much pain to let Kersten go. When the doctor was finally able to return to Berlin, in October, an early and terribly harsh winter was already beginning to immobilize the German Army. And despite severe losses, the Russians held on, knowing that weather and space were on their side.

One day that autumn when Kersten went to treat Himmler in Berlin, he found his patient in despair. The doctor asked what was wrong, and after some urging Himmler confided in him.

"You are my only friend," he said, "the only person I can talk to. I will tell you everything. After the collapse of France, Hitler made several peace offers to Britain, but the Jews who run that country rejected them. Nothing could be worse than war between Britain and Germany, but the Fuehrer knows that the Jews will go all the way in that war. There will be no peace on earth as long as they are in power—that is to say, as long as they exist."

"So?" the doctor asked.

"So," Himmler said, "the Fuehrer has ordered me to liquidate all the Jews in our power. This race must be killed off."

"But you can't," Kersten cried. "Think of the horror this means, of the suffering. What will the world think of Germany?"

"The great have to step over corpses. That is their tragedy," Himmler answered. Then his chin dropped to his narrow chest, and he remained silent. He seemed overwhelmed.

"At heart you cannot accept this atrocity," Kersten said. "Otherwise you wouldn't be so upset."

Himmler raised his head in surprise. "That's not it at all," he said. "I behaved like an imbecile," he went on ruefully. "When Hitler explained what he wanted done, I answered without thinking, 'My Fuehrer, I and my SS men are ready to die for you, but please do not give me this mission.' "

Himmler, breathing hard, described what had happened after he

said that. Hitler had been carried away by one of his insane tantrums. He could not stand the slightest opposition. He had leaped at Himmler, seized him by the neck and shouted, "I've made you everything you are. And now you refuse to obey me. You are a traitor."

Himmler had reacted with terror and despair. "My Fuehrer," he had begged, "forgive me. I will do everything, absolutely everything you order me to do. Never, never say that I am a traitor."

But Hitler had not calmed down. He had shouted again and stamped his feet. "The war will soon be over, and I have given the world my word that at the end of it there will not be one Jew left on earth. We must move quickly. I am not sure you are capable of it."

When he had finished this account, Himmler looked at Kersten like a beaten dog. "You understand now?" he asked.

Kersten understood all too well. Himmler did not care about destroying millions of Jews. He was worried because Hitler did not have complete confidence in him.

ONE DAY in the winter of 1942, Himmler startled Kersten with the query, "Could you treat a man who suffers from severe headaches, dizziness and insomnia?"

"I would have to see him," Kersten answered. "Everything would depend on what is causing these symptoms."

Himmler took a deep breath, as if suddenly winded. "You must swear to keep what I tell you absolutely secret."

"Herr Reichsfuehrer, keeping medical facts confidential is the first rule of my professional life."

"Excuse me, Kersten, but if you knew. . . . " Himmler went to his safe and took out a thick document. "Here," he said, handing it to Kersten with a gesture that cost him visible effort. "Read it. You are holding a secret report on the Fuehrer's illness."

Later Kersten wondered why Himmler had shown him the report. What anxieties had pushed him to it? Had Hitler's mental faculties suddenly given way? Had his rages been worse than usual now that the fortunes of war were turning against Germany?

The report was twenty-six pages long. It established the following facts. In his youth Hitler had contracted syphilis. He had been discharged from a hospital in Pasewalk apparently cured, but in 1937 symptoms appeared which showed that the disease was still active. By the beginning of 1942, there had been signs which made it evident that the Fuehrer was suffering from progressive syphilitic paralysis.

Mutely, Kersten gave the document back to Himmler. Its implications were so frightening that for a moment he could not think.

"Well," Himmler asked, "what can be done?"

"Unhappily, I cannot help in this case," Kersten said. "I am a specialist in manual therapy, not in mental illness. Is he under medical treatment?"

"Certainly," Himmler said. "Doctor Morell, his personal physician, gives him injections which he assures him will stop the progress of the disease and preserve his capacity for work."

"What guarantee do you have that this is true? There is no recognized cure for progressive syphilitic paralysis."

"I have thought of that myself," Himmler said.

Suddenly the Reichsfuehrer began to pace up and down, talking agitatedly. It was not the case of just any sick man, he said. Hitler could not be examined in a clinic for mental illness—the Allied intelligence services would find out and broadcast the information. Disastrous defeat could follow. Since the usual doctors would be sure to offer no hope, he had decided to rely on Morell, and it was essential that Morell should sustain Hitler until the victory.

"You see what anxieties I have," Himmler said. "The world considers Adolf Hitler a giant. I want him to remain that for history. He is the greatest genius who ever lived. What does it matter if he is sick, now that his work is practically finished?"

After he left Himmler's office, Kersten discreetly asked Rudolf Brandt about this medical report. Brandt turned pale.

"Did Himmler really speak about it to you? Don't you know what danger you are in now? You, a foreigner, have knowledge of our most important state secret. Apart from Himmler, only

Bormann and possibly Goering have this information. Never refer to it, even to the Reichsfuehrer. You risk your life if you do."

Kersten followed this advice. During the next week he saw Himmler every morning, but in their conversations there was not one word about Hitler's health. It was as if the report did not exist.

Then Himmler himself brought up the forbidden subject. Had the doctor thought of a way of treating Hitler effectively?

In his reply Kersten abandoned all caution, for he had been haunted by the subject. Hitler's judgment would be affected by his disease, Kersten said, his critical faculties unbalanced. Headaches, insomnia, trembling hands, fumbling with words, convulsions, paralysis of the limbs, all would increase relentlessly. The ecstatic illusions, the megalomania would have no check. Himmler was taking a terrible chance by leaving Hitler in Morell's hands. For Hitler's decisions determined the fate of millions, and who could say whether these decisions were made in a period of lucidity or in one of madness?

The Reichsfuehrer did not speak. Kersten, surprised at his own boldness, went on even more explicitly.

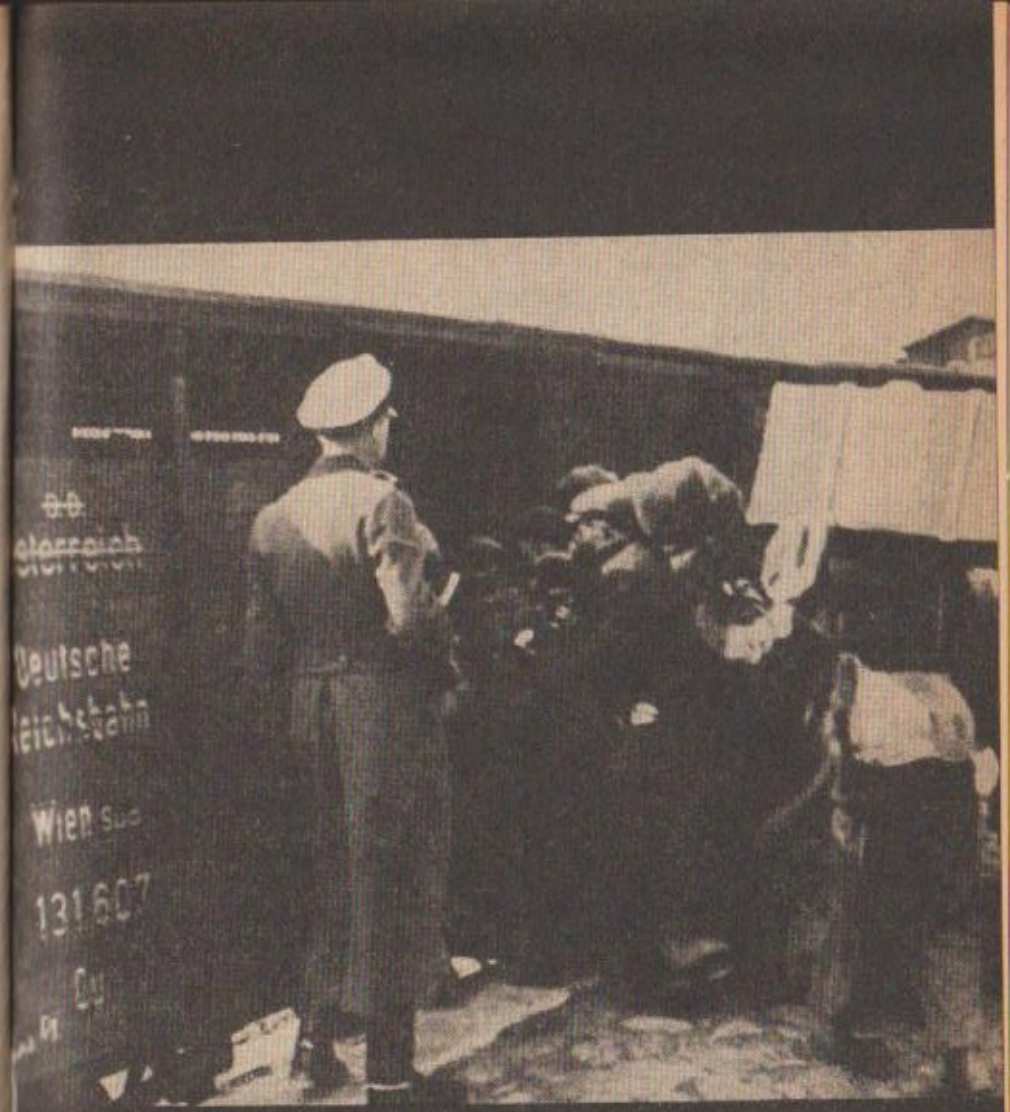
Only a man in complete possession of his faculties had the right to rule. Since this was no longer the case, Himmler did not have the right to recognize Hitler as his Fuehrer.

"I have thought of all that," Himmler mumbled, bowing his head. "Logically you are right. But here logic loses its hold. It is impossible to change horses now.

"Moreover, it is impossible for me to make a move against the Fuehrer," he continued. "I am commander of the SS, whose motto is: 'Honour is Loyalty.' How could I do it? The whole world would think I was acting from a personal desire to gain power."

"Then you are going to let Hitler go from bad to worse?" Kersten asked. "You are willing to leave the destiny of the German people in the hands of a man suffering from a terrible mental disease?"

"The risks are not yet such that I am forced to act," Himmler said finally. "If it is necessary, there will still be time later."



The Himmler regime at work: men being herded into a cattle truck for transportation to a concentration camp

In September 1943 the Finnish Government asked Kersten to come to Helsinki to make a general report. Since Finland had now entered the war as an ally of Germany, and Kersten was a Finnish citizen and officer, Himmler could not easily oppose the trip.

"Perhaps you can find out why your government hasn't handed over its Jews to us," he remarked.

As Kersten was getting ready to leave, the Swedish Ambassador invited him to stop in Stockholm long enough for some confidential interviews with Swedish Government ministers. This was harder to arrange, for in neutral Sweden he would be beyond the reach of German authority. But some 5,000 Finns, wounded in the Finnish war against Russia, were in hospital in Stockholm, and Kersten finally persuaded Himmler that he should stop there and help to treat them.

"All right, go," Himmler sighed. "But if there is any question about your not returning. . . ."

"Have I done anything to deserve such suspicion?" Kersten asked reproachfully. He pointed out that, of his three children, the two elder sons would remain in Hartzwalde; only his wife and youngest son would leave the country with him.

"Forgive me," Himmler pleaded with genuine regret. "You know how suspicious my life has made me. But you are the one man in the world in whose sincerity and good-will I believe."

When he reached Sweden, Kersten experienced the first real freedom he had known for four years. It was almost feverishly exciting to escape from the acute food shortage, the lack of heat, the nightly air raids and the pervasive Gestapo terror that characterized wartime Nazi Germany. But a meeting with Christian Gunther, the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, helped to bring him down to earth.

"Every day," Gunther informed him, "the Allies put more pressure on us to enter the war against Germany. This is contrary to our tradition of neutrality and to all our interests; the day after we declared war, Stockholm would be in ruins. Instead I have devised a humanitarian plan that would help the Allies. It is to save as many

people in the concentration camps as possible. Will you help us?"

Kersten assented enthusiastically. "I am ready with all the means at my disposal," he said.

Day after day, Kersten and Gunther met regularly. Together they worked out a vast, almost fantastic plan to wrest thousands of prisoners from the concentration camps and bring them to Sweden.

The Swedish Government would transport the prisoners and give them asylum. The Red Cross, represented by Count Folke Bernadotte, would serve as intermediary. But Kersten's role was the most important and the most difficult. He would have to persuade Himmler to allow the prisoners to go.

Following these talks, Kersten went on to Helsinki, made his report there, then returned to Germany. He wanted very much to leave his wife and child in the safety of Stockholm, but too many lives were at stake. For now, more than ever, he needed Himmler's complete, blind trust, and the only guarantee that his patient would understand would be the return of his wife and son.

Indeed, on 26th November, when Kersten telephoned him from Hartzwalde, Himmler's first question was about this. "Of course," he said, after he had expressed pleasure at Kersten's return, "you left your wife and son in Sweden?" He spoke in a polite, casual tone, as if he did not care.

"No," Kersten said, also casually "they are with me here."

"Really? I am very happy!" Himmler exclaimed. "Then you still believe in German victory. Forgive me—there are so many rumours about you. Now I know that you are a real friend."

Once he had settled back into the routine of his Berlin life, Kersten began to realize the magnitude of the task he had undertaken. How could he wrest victims from the callous Gestapo which thought of them as corpses even while they still breathed? He needed allies. Searching his mind for likely candidates, he thought of Colonel Walter Schellenberg and General Gottlob Berger, both of whom worked closely with Himmler.

Berger, who had risen from the ranks during the First World War, was aged about fifty. He had no taste for politics, but he loved the army and its discipline. Recognizing his passion for military strictness and administration, Himmler had given him the post of commander of the Waffen SS. ("Waffen," meaning weapons, distinguished the fighting branch of the SS from the branch that provided guards and executioners for the concentration camps.)

Berger had at first instinctively disliked Kersten. He felt that this fat civilian didn't look right among the military *élite*. But, caring about his associates' health, Himmler had ordered Berger to go to Kersten for a medical examination. Grumbling and swearing, the general obeyed. Kersten searched his body with his finger-tips and began to enumerate his patient's discomforts. Berger was amazed.

"How can you know?" he asked. "I've never told Himmler about these things."

As treatment continued, Berger began to trust Kersten; he even became grudgingly friendly. The doctor found that the general was concerned not only with discipline but with honour. He saw nothing in common between the real soldiers of the Waffen SS and the SS executioners, and he did not allow his men to mix with them. The Gestapo, the death camps and the racialism disgusted him.

Schellenberg was quite a different person—young, fair-haired, fastidiously groomed. He had a wide cultural background, impeccable manners and could speak perfect English. He had started under Heydrich in the special espionage services, and had had an extraordinary career. He was a colonel at thirty. Now, at thirty-four, he wanted to become Germany's youngest general, and he openly and aggressively courted Himmler's favour.

Two years earlier Himmler had asked Kersten to examine the young officer. "I don't think he needs your care," he said, "but during the examination you can study his character. He is very able, but his boundless ambition makes me uneasy."

When Schellenberg arrived to see Kersten, the two men looked at each other in silence. Though both knew that the purpose of the

visit was a medical examination, neither moved in that direction.

"I am glad to meet you at last, Colonel," Kersten said. "You have many enemies in Himmler's entourage. You succeed too rapidly. But on my account you have nothing to fear. I can help you a great deal if we become friends."

"I know that, Doctor," Schellenberg said. "I have come to ask for your friendship. I will do what is necessary for it."

From that day on Schellenberg had supported Kersten's undertakings, and as he was chief of counter-espionage his influence was decisive in many cases.

Before saying a word about his plan to Himmler, Kersten tried it out on these two men. He found them more inclined towards it than he had dared to hope. Schellenberg saw that Hitler was finished; when the Allies had won, it would be to his advantage to have saved thousands of prisoners. Berger's motive was simpler: he was disgusted by the atrocities. Thus, including Brandt, Kersten had three key men on his side.

His enemies were Ernst Kaltenbrunner, Heydrich's successor as chief of the Gestapo, and all his agents. Kaltenbrunner was melancholy, violent and eager for tortures and executions. Every time Kersten saved a life, Kaltenbrunner was furious. He hated the doctor's compassion for humanity.

"Watch that brute," Brandt warned. "He is capable of having you murdered."

FOR MONTHS Kersten made no specific proposals to Himmler; he simply stressed the fact on every possible occasion that the many Danish, Norwegian and Dutch concentration camp victims were, after all, Germanic. When the Allies invaded Normandy, however, in June 1944, he worked on the Reichsfuehrer in earnest. And slowly Himmler's loyalty to the Fuehrer's policies began to erode. "I think you are right," he volunteered one day. "We must not kill the whole world. We must be generous towards the German race."

But a few weeks later, when a German colonel tried to kill Hitler

by setting off a bomb in his headquarters, the attack renewed Himmler's fanatical loyalty to his master. Because Hitler wanted to see the blood of sacrifice flowing everywhere—he explicitly ordered Himmler to arrest 2,000 German officers in retaliation—Himmler and Kaltenbrunner were soon ravaging Germany in a merciless manhunt, striking down innocent and guilty alike.

On 1st August Himmler telephoned Kersten at Hartzwalde. He was very ill as a result of the strenuous manhunt, and asked the doctor to board his private train for East Prussia that afternoon.

As Kersten was preparing to leave his home for Berlin, where he would board Himmler's train, a sweat-soaked soldier sped up on a motor-cycle and handed him a letter. "From Colonel Schellenberg," the courier said. "It's urgent."

The note was alarming. "Look out. . . . Kaltenbrunner is planning to assassinate you in spite of Himmler. Don't take your usual route through Oranienburg. You risk death if you do."

Kersten thought quickly. He did not blindly trust Schellenberg, but this time he decided to take his advice, for he knew that Kaltenbrunner was Schellenberg's sworn enemy, his only dangerous rival.

As he got into his car, Kersten said to his chauffer, "Let's take the route through Templin today for a change."

They had no trouble on the trip. Kersten got to the station in time to catch Himmler's private train.

At the first opportunity the doctor showed Himmler the note. Himmler at once sent Brandt to Berlin to find out quietly whether Schellenberg's charge was true. This was not too difficult, for secret services, like the jungle, have their own laws. Kaltenbrunner had his agents in Schellenberg's network, and Schellenberg had his in Kaltenbrunner's. Brandt had procured agents for Himmler in both.

The next day Brandt was back. Schellenberg had told the truth. An ambush had been set up at Oranienburg, and Kersten and his chauffeur were to have been riddled with bullets.

The officer in charge of the patrol was then to have reported to Kaltenbrunner that a car had refused to stop when ordered, hence

he had fired on it. Kaltenbrunner would then tell Himmler that there had been a terrible misfortune: Dr. Kersten had been in the car and was dead.

Himmler received this report in the midst of a treatment. He arose and dressed with angry speed. "We're going to eat," he instructed Brandt. "Tell Kaltenbrunner to join us."

The meal began in silence. Finally, Kaltenbrunner opened the conversation by baiting Kersten with scarcely concealed animosity. The Reichsfuehrer interrupted suddenly. "Listen to me, Kaltenbrunner. You would not have survived Kersten by an hour."

Kaltenbrunner paled, and his fear was obvious.

Himmler continued. "I hope that both you and Doctor Kersten lead long, healthy lives. You are both important to me. I will not tolerate accidents. If anything at all should happen to Doctor Kersten, it would be very, very bad for you. Is that clear?"

"Entirely, Herr Reichsfuehrer," Kaltenbrunner said.

THE ATTEMPTED assassination served to reinforce Kersten's position. He became all the more indispensable to Himmler because he had almost been lost. Taking advantage of this, he boldly pushed the Swedish life-saving plan.

The struggle for Himmler's assent was long, and marked by many setbacks. But on 8th December 1944, Kersten won several sweeping concessions—as a result, ironically, of completely losing his temper.

A friend of his, Carl Wentzel, had been implicated in the plot on Hitler's life. He was imprisoned and sentenced to death. Because of the nature of the crime, Kersten could not get him released, but he did extract from Himmler a promise to spare Wentzel's life. Indeed Himmler pledged his word, on his honour as a German leader.

Nevertheless, on 8th December, the doctor learnt that Wentzel had been hanged. It was a shattering blow. Without thinking, Kersten roughly flung open the Reichsfuehrer's door and stood before him, fists clenched with anger.

"So that's what your word means," he raged. "This is the honour of a great German leader!"

Himmler's shoulders sagged and his lips trembled. He could not bear to be exposed as a liar before a man whose love and admiration he coveted. "Believe me," he protested. "I couldn't do anything. Hitler wanted it at any price."

Kersten turned his back on him.

"No, no! Don't go away," Himmler cried. "Listen to me."

But Kersten went out, slamming the door behind him.

In the outer office, Brandt defended Himmler's integrity in the matter. "Don't forget," Brandt said, "Hitler was convinced that Wentzel was in the conspiracy against him. In that sort of situation Himmler's power doesn't count for much."

Kersten's anger faded. He went back to Himmler and said, now quite calmly, "I will believe that Hitler's intervention made it impossible for you to keep your word in the Wentzel matter *if* you keep it in the domain where you *are* master."

"Anything you want—I swear it!" Himmler exclaimed.

And he immediately agreed to free fifty Norwegian students and fifty Danish policemen at once; to free 3,000 Dutch, French, Belgian and Polish women as soon as Sweden could take them; and to move all Scandinavian prisoners into a single camp away from the area of Allied bombing.

It was a memorable day, but Kersten was not satisfied. He had been informed that Switzerland was ready to take 20,000 Jews if he could obtain their release. Would Himmler agree to it?

"Don't even think of it," Himmler said, terrified. "Hitler would have me hanged on the spot."

But when Kersten continued to plead, Himmler finally offered a compromise. "All I can give you is 2,000," he said, "or at the most 3,000. I beg you not to ask me for more."

For two months he seemed to have forgotten this promise. Then one day 2,700 Jews imprisoned at a sorting camp were ordered to the gas chambers and cremation ovens. The trains were loaded with

these unfortunates, and the convoy officer telephoned Himmler's headquarters for permission to start the trains.

"You say 2,700?" Himmler asked Brandt, who brought him the information. The number jogged his memory, and suddenly he exclaimed, "That's just right. Have these trains sent to the Swiss frontier instead of the east. Inform the Swiss authorities, the Gestapo, the railways and our frontier guards."

He shook his head and added delightedly, "Two thousand seven hundred—one would think it had been done on purpose. Not too many and not too few. Just enough to satisfy one of the good doctor's whims."

One can imagine how this particular "whim" must have struck the 2,700 doomed men, women and children as, mere skeletons in rags, they stumbled out of their cattle trucks at their destination. For, instead of being thrown into the gas chambers, they were met by an SS company which ceremoniously ushered them across the frontier into Switzerland, where Red Cross nurses welcomed them with smiles, tears—and the gift of life.

AS THE VICE tightened on Germany, Hitler's maniacal rage knew no limits. Allied intelligence learned that, in his insane desire for vengeance, he had formally ordered Himmler to dynamite the concentration camps, with all their prisoners, as soon as enemy troops were within five miles of them. As there were 800,000 prisoners in these camps, the Allies appealed to the Swedes to prevent this final horror. The Swedish ministers in turn appealed to Kersten, during one of his now periodic visits to Stockholm, to do what he could to stop the seemingly inevitable massacre.

"Is it true that you have been ordered to blow up the concentration camps when the Allies approach?" Kersten asked Himmler one day during treatment.

"It is true," the Reichsfuehrer said. "If we lose the war, our enemies must die with us."

"The great Germans of the past would not have behaved like

that," Kersten said. "And you are the greatest German leader today. You are more powerful than Hitler now. Your country is collapsing. Her armies are overrun everywhere. The generals can do nothing. You have the only force left—the SS police."

Himmler did not answer. He knew Kersten's words were true. But the thought of taking the complete responsibility of leadership made him unbearably anxious.

"Be generous, then," Kersten went on.

"And who will thank me?" Himmler said. "No one."

"History," Kersten said. "You will have the glory of having saved 800,000 lives."

When Himmler simply shrugged, Kersten did not insist. But he returned to the subject the next day, and again the next—as did Brandt and Berger and Schellenberg.

Finally, on 12th March 1945, Himmler drafted with his own hand one of the most extraordinary documents to come out of the war. Called "A Contract in the Name of Humanity," it provided that:

1. The concentration camps would not be dynamited.
2. Not one more Jew would be executed.
3. Sweden could send parcels to individual Jewish prisoners.

Himmler signed the document first, then Kersten.

KERSTEN reported this electrifying news in Stockholm a few days later, then added, "I also have permission to take a representative of the World Jewish Congress to meet Himmler."

"That's absurd," Christian Gunther exclaimed. "I know you are Doctor Miracle, but this would be impossible even for you."

It was not. To cap his great victory, Kersten had persuaded Himmler to free 5,000 more Jews, and after that, seized by a wild inspiration, he asked the Reichsfuehrer personally to meet a Jew to work out the details of the liberation. It seemed proper to him that the executioner should pay honour to a spokesman of the condemned.

Himmler had ranted at first, but in the end, almost as if he had a

chronic need to obey a stronger will, he submitted to the fantastic request. The meeting was to be held at Hartzwalde.

The World Jewish Congress now quickly selected an envoy, a young man named Norbert Masur. Kersten met him in Stockholm, and on 19th April they took off for Berlin in a plane provided by Himmler. It was one of the last planes to carry the swastika, and they were the only passengers. As they approached Berlin they heard the roar of Russian artillery. Underground, below the Chancellery of the Third Reich, a trapped and raging Hitler was sending out the last frantic orders of desperation and madness.

They reached Hartzwalde at midnight. Two hours later Schellenberg arrived, dressed in civilian clothes. He was weary, depressed and anxious. Himmler, he reported, was under fierce pressure from Martin Bormann, who shared Hitler's frenzy, to carry out the massacre of all prisoners.

"I am afraid that Himmler will end by giving in," said Schellenberg to Kersten. "He is jealous of Bormann's relationship with Hitler." (Bormann was head of the Nazi Party.) It all seemed monstrously unreal. While the Reich was collapsing round them, the Nazi leaders could still continue their intrigues, their crazy dance round the king of madmen.

"It is essential that you get Himmler to confirm the promises he has made," Schellenberg continued. "But if he breaks his word, Brandt and I will try to prevent his orders from being sent out."

That morning Schellenberg returned to Berlin to bring Himmler back to Hartzwalde, but he explained that they would be late in arriving. "Himmler will be attending a delightful little family party—Hitler's birthday," he explained.

Kersten and Masur waited impatiently well into that night. At last Himmler drove up, accompanied by Schellenberg and Brandt.

Himmler wore his best black uniform, covered with medals. He was perfectly at ease as he and Masur met. When the men sat down round a table, Himmler proceeded without any embarrassment to make a long speech on the Jewish problem. Though he was not

violent or coarse, as he often was on the subject, he left out none of his strongest anti-Semitic ideas.

Kersten admired Masur's self-control. But when Himmler began explaining that the Jews carried typhus and other diseases and that it was to stop epidemics that they had been sent to the cremation ovens, he himself had to break in. "We are not here to talk about the past," he said. "Our real interest is to see what we can still save."

"That is right," Masur said. "The least that can be done is to guarantee the lives of all remaining Jews in Germany."

There was a long, agonizing discussion. Even in this eleventh-hour meeting, Himmler was afraid that Hitler would find him out. It was not until nearly 6 a.m. that he agreed to Masur's request.

As dawn was breaking, Kersten accompanied Himmler to his car. A cold, wet wind shook the branches of the trees. The two men did not speak. They knew they would not see each other again.

Reaching the car, Himmler turned to Kersten. "I do not know how much longer I shall live," he said. "Whatever happens, I beg of you not to think badly of me. I have undoubtedly made great errors. But Hitler wanted me to be hard. With us, the best part of Germany will disappear."

He got into the car, then took the doctor's hand, pressed it in his and said in a choked voice, "Kersten, I thank you for everything. Have pity on me. I am thinking of my poor family." In the early morning light Kersten saw tears in the eyes of the man who had ordered more executions and more massacres than any other man in history, and yet who knew so well how to pity himself.

Then the door shut, and the car drove off.

Postscript

TWO WEEKS after Germany surrendered, Himmler was still at large, although most of the surviving Nazi leaders had been rounded up. On 21st May 1945, however, a routine check by British guards at a bridge in Bremervörde, a small town in north-western Germany, brought in a man who identified himself as Heinrich

Hitzinger. The fact that his identity documents were in perfect order aroused the guards' suspicions, for few of the thousands of refugees who then clogged German roads had any papers at all. It was Himmler. He had shaved off his moustache and donned an eye-patch by way of disguise. He escaped trial as a war criminal by crushing a vial of poison between his teeth in prison camp a few days later. He was dead within fifteen minutes.

At the war-criminal trials Gottlob Berger was given a twenty-five year sentence and was released after serving five. Schellenberg got six years, and was released after serving two. He died a year later at the age of forty-two.

Rudolf Brandt was held responsible for all the monstrous directives he had drafted and initialled when Himmler had given him verbal orders. Kersten did everything in his power to defend him. Nothing availed; Rudolf Brandt was hanged.

Felix Kersten settled in Sweden after the war, but for a long time remained under a shadow—he had been doctor to the most infamous of all Nazi murderers. Learning of this taint, some of the Dutch whom Kersten had assisted were indignant. At their suggestion, a special commission was set up to enquire into his wartime record. In 1949, after examining scores of witnesses and hundreds of documents, the commission vindicated Kersten completely. He was subsequently decorated by the Dutch Government.

In 1953 Kersten was granted Swedish citizenship, and in an official White Paper the Swedish Foreign Office praised his role in saving thousands of prisoners. From his base in Stockholm, he again practised with great success in Germany, Sweden, Holland and France until he died from a heart attack on 16th April 1960.

Condensed from "The Magic Touch," published by Hart-Davis, London

The RAF versus the V-2

By Allan Michie

In the late evening of 17th August 1943, a fleet of 600 RAF heavy night bombers roared out across the North Sea. The next day an Air Ministry communiqué recorded that the research station at Peenemünde, Germany, had been attacked.

Behind the deliberately vague language of that communiqué lies one of the most dramatic stories of the war. Unknown to all except a handful of men, Bomber Command had won an aerial battle which was a landmark of the war. It remained a secret, however, for almost a year, until the first robot bombs began to crash on London.

By the spring of 1943, the Allied air offensive had opened gaping wounds across Germany and, to beat back our bombers, the Nazis decided to concentrate on the production of fighter planes.

Soon, with its bomber force reduced to a few hundred obsolete machines, the Luftwaffe was unable to penetrate Britain's defences except for hit-and-run attacks. But there remained flying bombs and long-range rockets with which to satisfy the German people's demands for bombing reprisals. If these weapons could be mass-produced in time, they would enable the Germans to take the offensive in the air without using their precious bombers or airmen.

The decision was taken, and orders went out from Hitler to complete quickly the experiments with flying bombs and rockets —the V-1's and V-2's—and to rush them into production.

The main development centre was the Luftwaffe research station at Peenemünde, tucked away in a forest behind the beach of the Baltic Sea, 60 miles north-east of Stettin and 700 miles from Britain. Electrified barbed wire kept away all snoopers.

Into Peenemünde went the best technical brains of the Luftwaffe and the top men in German aeronautical and engineering science. In charge was the veteran Luftwaffe scientist, Major-General Wolfgang von Chamier-Glisezenski. Under him was a staff of several thousand experts on jet-propulsion and rocket projectiles. These scientists were set to work round the clock, for Hitler hoped to unleash his "secret weapons" during the winter of 1943–4.

Enthusiasts believed that the secret weapons would decide the war within twenty-four hours. More realistic Germans hoped that they would at least disrupt British war production and delay the invasion, or perhaps force the Allies into premature invasion of the heavily defended Calais coast from which the Germans would launch their new weapons. And even if they failed to prove decisive, the reprisal bombing would bolster German morale and be useful later in bargaining for a compromise peace.

By July 1943, British intelligence reports had definitely located Peenemünde as Germany's chief spawning-ground for robot bombs and rockets. A file of reports and aerial reconnaissance pictures was placed in the hands of a special British cabinet committee, which suggested that the RAF grant Peenemünde a high priority in its bombing attentions. Air Chief Marshal Harris decided to stage a surprise raid during the next clear moonlight period.

The Germans had become careless about Peenemünde. RAF night bombers frequently flew over it on their way to Stettin and even to Berlin, and Germans working at Peenemünde used to watch British planes pass overhead, secure in the belief that the British did not know of Peenemünde's importance.

Special reconnaissance photographs for the raid were taken with great care to avoid warning the Germans that the RAF was interested in Peenemünde. They were made during reconnaissance

flights over Baltic ports, to which the Germans had grown accustomed. These photographs enabled planners of the raid to pick out three targets where the most damage would be done.

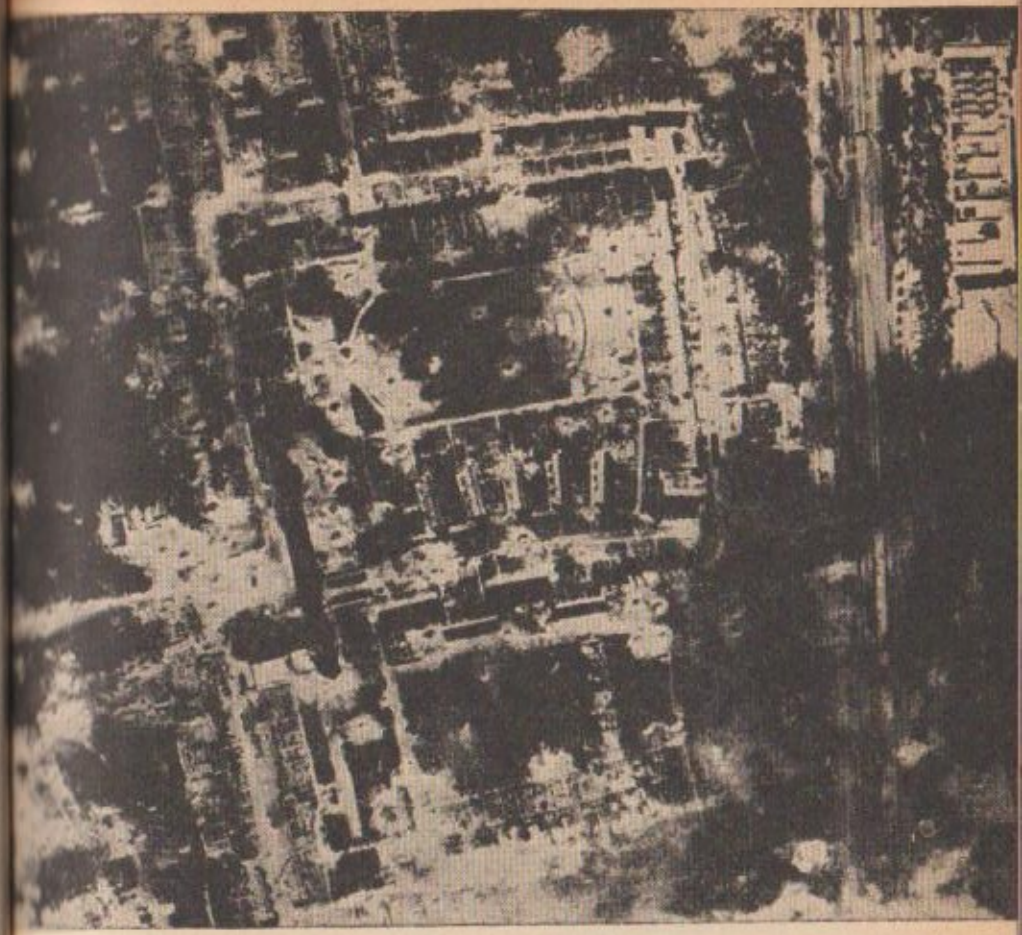
The first was the living quarters of the scientists and technicians. The second consisted of hangars and workshops containing experimental bombs and rockets. The third was the administrative area—buildings containing blueprints and technical data.

The night of 17th August was selected because the moon would be almost full. The crews were told only that Peenemünde was an important radar experimental station; that they would catch a lot of German scientists there, and that their job was to kill as many of them as possible. After the briefing, a special note from Bomber Command headquarters was read aloud: "The extreme importance of this target and the necessity of achieving its destruction with one attack is to be impressed on all crews. If the attack fails to achieve its object, it will have to be repeated on ensuing nights—regardless, within practicable limits, of casualties."

Nearly 600 heavy bombers took off and roared down on Peenemünde by an indirect route. Peenemünde's defenders, apparently believing that the bombers were headed for Stettin or Berlin, were caught napping. Pathfinders went in first, swooped low over their target and dropped coloured flares round aiming points. Bombers using revolutionary new bomb-sights followed. Scorning the light flak, wave after wave unloaded high explosives and incendiaries from a few thousand feet on the three clearly visible targets. In forty minutes the area was an almost continuous strip of fire.

As the last wave of bombers flew homeward, the German night fighters which had been waiting in vain round Berlin caught up with them, and forty-one British bombers were lost.

The next morning a reconnaissance Spitfire photographed the damage. Half the forty-five huts in which scientists and specialists lived had been obliterated, and the remainder were badly damaged. In addition, forty buildings, including assembly shops and laboratories, had been completely destroyed and fifty others damaged.



After 600 bombers had attacked Peenemunde (above), living quarters, workshops and office buildings were pitted with craters. The RAF prevented the V-2 (left) from becoming "the secret weapon that would decide the war within twenty-four hours"

In a few days news of even more satisfactory results began to trickle in. For, at the end of the raid, RAF blockbusters combined with German explosives stored underground had set off such a tremendous blast that people living three miles away were killed.

Head scientist von Chamier-Glisezenski died during the raid. Reports drifted out from Germany that he had been shot by agents or jealous Gestapo officials. Two days after the attack, the Germans announced the death of General Jeschonnek, the Luftwaffe's Chief of Staff and a young Hitler favourite, who had been visiting Peenemünde. Then the Nazis admitted that General Ernst Udet, veteran aviator of the First World War and early organizer of the Luftwaffe, had met death under mysterious circumstances. It seemed likely that Udet had also been in Peenemünde.

Nazi reaction to the raid was violent. Gestapo men quizzed survivors and combed the countryside for traitors who might have tipped off the RAF to Peenemünde's importance. General Walther Schreckenback, of the black-shirted secret service, was given command of Peenemünde, with orders to resume work on the flying bombs and rockets.

The Germans were further set back during the spring of 1944 by Allied air attacks on flying bomb and rocket launching ramps in the Pas de Calais, and on component parts factories. So the people were told that the secret weapons were intended as anti-invasion weapons, being saved to blast the Allies in the ports and on the beaches. D-Day, however, caught the Germans still not ready. Not until seven days after the Allies invaded Normandy did the first flying bomb fall on London.

If Peenemünde hadn't been blasted as and when it was, the robot-bomb attacks on London would doubtless have begun months before they did, and would have been many times as heavy. London, centre of invasion planning, would have been severely stricken. The invasion itself might have had to be postponed.

Condensed from Saturday Night

They Kidnapped a General

By Greg Keeton

ONE NIGHT in 1944 two young British officers, both under twenty-five, sat in a café in Cairo. On leave after a long spell of fighting, they were trying to think up a piece of devilment that would hurt the Nazis. Suddenly they had an idea: why not kidnap a German general?

On the face of it such a scheme was fantastic. But British military authorities in Cairo and London liked the idea. The victim decided upon was a distinguished member of Hitler's Wehrmacht—Major-General Karl Kreipe, one of the heroes of Leningrad, now in command of the 22,000 troops on the Greek island of Crete. Capturing him would upset German planning in the Mediterranean, and it would be a poke in the ribs that would bring a chuckle to the rebellious millions living under Nazi occupation. And people who laugh are not afraid.

One February night, therefore, a British plane roared over a guerrilla hide-out in the mountains of Crete. Out of it parachuted one of the schemers—Major "Paddy" Leigh-Fermor, a handsome Irishman who was also a noted Greek scholar. But before his companion, Major W. Stanley Moss, could jump, the plane was lost in clouds and was forced to turn back.

Moss came back ten times during the next six weeks, through fog and flak, but each time failed to make contact with Leigh-Fermor and the Cretans. Finally, arranging an approach by sea, he

slipped past the German coastal-patrol boats in a launch one night and waded on to a mined beach. Leigh-Fermor and a band of murderous-looking Cretan mountain men were waiting there to help Moss pull through the surf the boatload of guns and ammunition he had brought. Then they set out in pitch darkness to climb the switchback goat trails to their first hide-out. It would have been difficult going in daylight. At night it was torture. When, at 4 a.m., they arrived at the cave, their feet were blistered, their bodies black and blue from falls.

For two more nights the band marched north, over trails used by German patrols. They hid out during the day with villagers. Moss and Leigh-Fermor passed the time reading *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Oxford Book of Verse*, and listening to the clump of hobnailed boots as German soldiers tramped up and down the cobbled streets.

Now Paddy Leigh-Fermor rubbed his moustache with burnt cork, stuck his legs through ragged trousers, bound a kerchief over his head, and started down into Herakleion, the capital of Crete. He was to meet a guerrilla called "Micky" Akoumianakis. Micky knew more about the activities of General Kreipe than anyone else —he lived next door to him.

Leigh-Fermor saw that a kidnapping raid on the General's residence was out of the question. The villa was surrounded by three rows of barbed wire charged with electricity and guarded by dogs and a platoon of troops. So, for the next four days, the young Irishman watched from Micky's window until he had a time-table of the General's movements.

Every morning the General drove from his villa to military headquarters, five miles away. Every evening he returned after dark. This suggested that one night the kidnappers could trap him in his car. Studying the road, Leigh-Fermor and Micky found the perfect spot for a hold-up—an L-turn so sharp that all cars were obliged to brake there and change gear.

Leigh-Fermor then returned to the hide-out to confer with Moss.

Their evolving plan called for twelve men: eight in the ditches alongside the road and four stationed ahead to warn of the General's approach. The two British officers were to masquerade as German military police. For this purpose the guerrillas got hold of two German uniforms. Into the lapels of each Micky's wife sewed suicide tablets to be used in case of capture.

By now the Germans had got wind of a British party of some sort on the island, and the little band was kept stumbling up and down the mountains every night to a new hide-out. They slept in caves or lofts. Once they sat in a loft, their automatics trained on the door, while four Germans, not suspecting their presence, banged about downstairs demanding food.

By 23rd April, preparations were complete. The operation was scheduled for the following night. And then General Kreipe upset the time-table. For three nights in a row he came home while it was still light, as if he suspected that something was afoot.

On the fourth day the British officers watched the daylight fade and darkness come—and no sign as yet of the General. This was it.

The twelve men took their places at the ambush. They waited an hour. Finally, the spotters' torches blinked. A car flying two metallic pennants came down the road.

As the car slowed for the L-turn, Leigh-Fermor and Moss, wearing correct German Military Police uniforms, waved it to a halt. Paddy opened the right-hand door and pulled Kreipe out on to the road. The two rolled over and over, Kreipe cursing, kicking and lashing out with his fists until three guerrillas handcuffed him and tossed him into the back of the car. When the chauffeur reached for a revolver, Moss coshed him and dumped him into a ditch unconscious.

Leigh-Fermor put on the General's hat and took the General's place beside the driver's seat. Moss slid behind the wheel. Manoli Peterakis and George Tyrakis, two of the guerrillas, sat in the back, Kreipe between them.

Soon after they started down the road they saw the swinging red

General Kreipe (centre) and his captors, Stanley Moss (left) and Paddy Leigh-Fermor. They evaded 22,000 German troops to escape from Crete

lamp of a German control post. Tyrakis unsheathed his knife and made clear to Kreipe what would happen if he dared call for help. The sentry stepped to one side as the car approached; Moss slowed just long enough to let him see the flags on the wings, then roared on.

When the kidnapping expedition came abreast of the General's home, the gates swung open, two guards stiffened to attention. Moss honked the horn, Leigh-Fermor motioned that he would not be entering, and the car whirled on.

Altogether, they went through twenty-two German control posts. Their worst moments were in Herakleion, where the cinema was just closing. The streets swarmed with German soldiers. Moss tooted; the troops saluted. Paddy, imposing in the General's hat, nodded back, stone-faced.

Once through the city, "we felt a terrific elation," wrote Moss in his book telling of the exploit.* "We started discussing what sort of celebration we would have when we got back to Cairo."

But Cairo was still a long way off. They abandoned the car and took to the mountains, knowing well that every single man of the 22,000 Germans on Crete would soon be hunting the General throughout the island's thirty-five-mile width and 165-mile length.

By mid-afternoon of the next day the sky was full of planes with observers scanning the countryside through binoculars. Now and then they would let fall a shower of leaflets: "If General Kreipe is not returned within three days all rebel villages in the Herakleion district will be razed." The Germans did dynamite Anoyia—a 900-year-old town—and then dive-bombed what masonry was left standing.

Every night the kidnappers fled east and south. The General turned out to be rather a pleasant fellow; he kept pace with the others on their nightly marches, and accepted his embarrassing plight without complaint. Sometimes, however, he worried about his numerous sisters. He, a bachelor, had long provided for them, but in the German Army allotments ceased the moment a soldier was taken prisoner.

* "Ill Met By Moonlight," published by Harrap

Meanwhile, Leigh-Fermor and Moss were becoming haggard over their failure to contact a radio operator who could confirm arrangements with Cairo about their escape ship. Then one night, stumbling into a guerrilla hide-out, they heard an English voice, and there was the man they had been searching for. But when he tried to send their message nothing happened. His transmitter was out of order.

It looked as if their early good fortune was finished. They dispatched runners to the only other two radio operators on the island, asking them to transmit a message to Cairo, but these operators were a long way off. And now the Germans were organizing a massive drive up and through the mountains.

One afternoon an urgent message reached the weary band. One of the guerrillas, translating rapidly, said that lorry-loads of soldiers were preparing to encircle the mountain on which they were hiding; they must make a break for the coast at once.

This meant climbing at night, at top speed, over Mount Ida, 8,000 feet high. They left at dusk and climbed for twelve hours. Soft snow concealed treacherously deep crevasses. At the summit it was drizzling. The men had no food, and for shelter they found only a shepherd's crumbled, roofless hut. There they waited until night, freezing, then started the descent. "It took us two hours—stumbling and falling—to reach the bottom of the snow belt," wrote Moss in his diary, "and then we found ourselves groping through stunted trees. Twigs would snap back in your face and brambles would tear at your clothes and hands." The mood of the guerrillas became so ugly that Moss and Leigh-Fermor felt concerned for the safety of the General.

Sitting in a ditch twenty-four hours later, in a downpour, shivering and miserable after accomplishing what must have been a record-breaking ascent and descent, Leigh-Fermor re-read the message which had sent them scrambling over Mount Ida. The guerrilla had made a mistake in translating it; far from urging them to go over the mountain, it had implored them not to move.

Then another piece of bad luck: when they got to the beach where they had planned to wait for their get-away, they found 200 Germans encamped there. Now a whole new set of arrangements had to be made. When a radio operator was located, a new rendezvous was suggested.

"We are feeling the anti-climax of this business acutely," Moss wrote a week later. "It seems that we now have everything to lose and nothing whatever to gain."

But at this point, with the Germans sniffing in narrowing circles all round them, their luck turned. A murderer and two sheep thieves joined the group. "They are the shiftiest-looking men I have ever set eyes upon," wrote Moss. "However, they have a matchless knowledge of every path and track, which makes them peerless as guides."

So, assisted by their new guides, the kidnappers continued to elude the Germans.

On the night of 14th May, after almost three weeks of flight, they were awakened by a messenger: "A boat is coming to fetch you at Rodakino Beach tomorrow night. You'll have to hurry to get there in time." Led by their sheep thieves, they raced up and down mountains hour after hour, arriving at noon on a hill overlooking the beach.

Downshore, some distance away, was a German camp; less than a mile upshore was another. At nine o'clock that evening they slid down to the beach between the two. And then the most welcome sound in the world—a low throb of motors!

Safely in Cairo three days later, Leigh-Fermor and Moss bade the General good-bye. "He smiled at us with a rueful though kindly expression," says Moss, "and then he was gone." He was taken to a prison camp in Britain.

Leigh-Fermor and Moss were awarded the Distinguished Service Order. As for Kreipe, he held no grudge, for the adventure saved his life. The other two generals in command of the Cretan garrisons were executed as war criminals by sentence of a Greek tribunal.

The Greatest Sea-Air Battle in History

By Hanson Baldwin

EASTER SUNDAY, 1st April 1945, a time of prayer and hope in a world at war, was a shining day in the East China Sea. The ocean was calm, the sun strong. Shadowy on the horizon loomed the escarpments of Okinawa, soon afterwards to become a corner-stone of history.

To seize Okinawa, the greatest naval armada in history—more than forty carriers, eighteen battleships, 200 destroyers, hundreds of transports, supply ships, mine-sweepers, landing-craft—a total of 1,321 ships transporting 183,000 assault troops—was steaming deep into Japanese waters. Well off-shore cruised the famed Task Force 58 under Admiral Mitscher, while off the beaches the transports and landing-ships were disembarking their marine and army assault units. In the distance the guns of the battleships flamed and thundered. In the skies planes dipped and bombed.

Okinawa is a lizard-shaped land mass fringed with coral reefs, about sixty miles long and from two to eighteen miles wide. A narrow isthmus divides the northern two-thirds of the island —rugged, mountainous and heavily forested—from the rolling, hilly land of the south. The main Japanese defence lines were in the southern sector, seamed by escarpments and ravines, dotted with limestone caves.

The assault on Okinawa was a logical development of Pacific strategy. Medium bombers could be based there to intensify the

assault on Japan being conducted from the Marianas. From it virtually all Japanese shipping routes could be severed. Okinawa was also wanted as a supporting position for the invasion of Kyushu, scheduled for 1st November.

The Okinawa operation was envisioned as a "quick" one, lasting a month or less. Intelligence estimates reported that the enemy had about 60,000 troops on the island and 198 major artillery pieces. But Intelligence was to be rudely surprised and hopes of a quick victory were soon bogged down. More than 110,000 of the enemy were to die and 7,400 to surrender; more than 49,000 Americans were to be killed, wounded or missing before the "Last Battle" ended. For the Japanese high command was determined to hold Okinawa and to use the major portion of the Empire's air and sea strength to destroy the American fleet. To accomplish this, the enemy was counting chiefly on suicidal *Kamikaze* flyers.

A shadow of the terror impending at Okinawa touched the invasion fleet even before the landings. The *Indianapolis*, flagship of the armada, had been hit by a *Kamikaze* as had the *Adams*; the *Murray* had been disabled by a torpedo; the *Skylark* had been blown up by a mine. By 3rd April the sheltered anchorages at Kerama Rhetto were beginning to clot with crippled ships.

Friday, 6th April was a busy day. Ashore, round a hill called The Pinnacle, a desperate battle raged—the first in a struggle to break the enemy's fortified Shuri Line. Afloat, cruisers and battleships steamed back and forth shelling Japanese positions, while planes from seventeen "jeep" carriers furnished air support for the ground troops and flew air patrols for the surface ships. Huddled off the beaches were the transports and cargo vessels, keeping the stream of men and supplies moving over the coral reefs and through the surf. And ringing the island in a great circle fifty miles out were the destroyers, the amphibious rescue craft—the radar picket-line.

Before daylight the rescue craft reported "heavy air attacks." Nine enemy planes were "splashed" in the transport area by anti-aircraft fire. During the afternoon Japanese planes roared in from

all directions, 182 planes in twenty-two different attacks between one and six p.m. Many dropped bombs or torpedoes, but more than a score crashed into American ships in suicide dives. The victims were mostly in the far-flung radar picket-line.

A destroyer-sweeper and two destroyers were sunk; nine escort types were heavily damaged, one by depth charges attached to floating planks; a tank landing-craft was burnt "end to end"; two ammunition ships went down.

But the Japanese losses were huge—almost 400 planes on 6th April and the early morning of the 7th. Of these, 300 were stopped at the picket-line at the cost of only two US planes. And on the 7th, in a sudden convulsive shudder and a pyramid of spiralling smoke, died the largest battleship in the world, the last pride of the Japanese Navy, the 18-inch-gunned *Yamato*. Planes of Task Force 58 got her as she steamed towards Okinawa.

The "Sons of Heaven" came again in great numbers out of the clouds on the 11th. The *Enterprise*, one of the aircraft carriers of the Pacific war, took "considerable damage" from two suicide near-misses; the *Essex* was damaged.

The 12th was the day of Roosevelt's death. At Okinawa the news spread swiftly from foxhole to flight deck to gun turret, but there was no time to mourn. That day many another American died with his President, for in the clear bright afternoon 175 enemy planes in seventeen different raids reached Okinawa. At 1.58 p.m. the *Cassin Young* shot down four planes but took a direct hit from a *Kamikaze* in the forward engine-room: one killed, fifty-four wounded. At 2 p.m. the *Jeffers* was lashed by fire from a near-miss. At 2 p.m. the new destroyer *M. L. Abele* had her back broken and sank: six killed, thirty-four wounded, seventy-four missing. The battleship *Tennessee* was hit; parts of the *Idaho* were flooded; the *New Mexico* was holed by a shell.

Meanwhile, ashore, the marines cleaned up the northern part of the island against limited resistance, but troops driving south met the enemy's "iron defence." In the foxholes in front of the Shuri

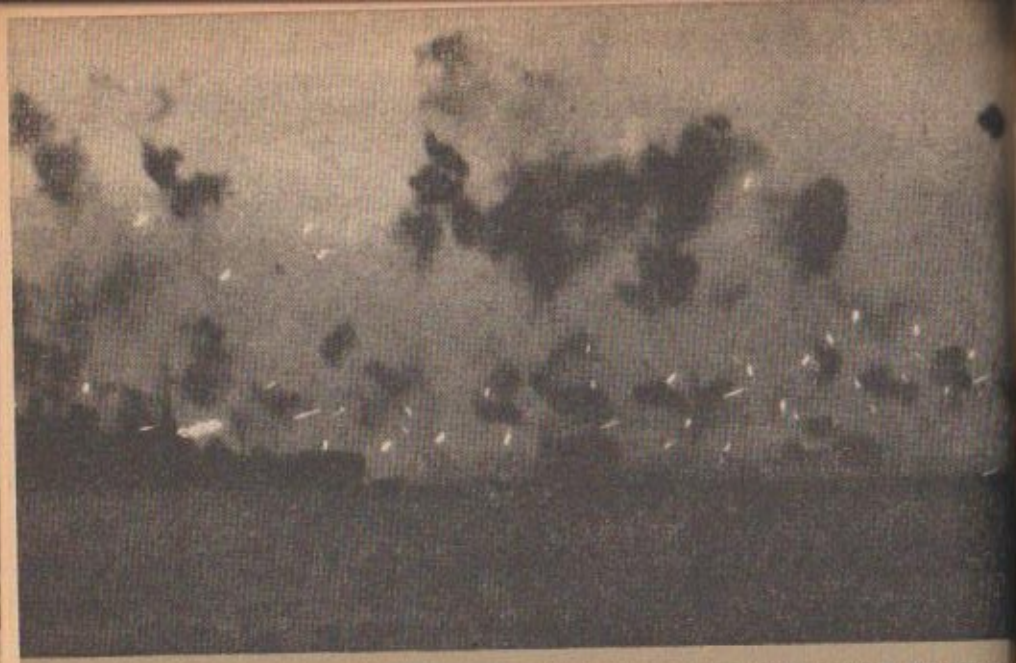
Line, Japanese propaganda leaflets proclaimed: "We must express our deep regret over the death of President Roosevelt. The 'American Tragedy' is now raised here at Okinawa with his death. You must have seen seventy per cent of your carriers and seventy-three per cent of your battleships sink or be damaged, causing 150,000 casualties. A grand 'US Sea Bottom Fleet' numbering 500 has been brought into existence round this island."

Another bad day was 17th April. The carrier *Intrepid* was hit, a destroyer sunk, many of the rescue craft damaged. The "hot corners" of the radar picket-line were given a standing air patrol of two planes each and each station was double-banked with two destroyers to provide greater anti-aircraft fire power. But Admiral Spruance, commanding the 5th Fleet, reported to his commander-in-chief in the Pacific, Admiral Nimitz: "The skill and effectiveness of enemy suicide air attacks and the rate of loss and damage to ships are such that all available means should be employed to prevent further attacks. Recommend attacks with all available planes on Kyushu and Formosa fields."

The attacks were made; the Japanese airfields were pounded relentlessly by bombs and rockets. But the *Kamikazes* were well dispersed and camouflaged; the suicide raids continued. The damaged ships clogged the anchorage at Kerama Rhetto; there was a trail of limping cripples all the way across the Pacific. But replacements of flesh and steel moved steadily westward.

Gone now were the hopes of a quick victory. The US forces settled down for a long trial by blood and fire. For more than forty consecutive days—until foul weather brought a brief break—there were air raids every night and every day. "Magic," the navy's system of breaking the enemy's codes, had enabled the fleet to forecast the days of big attacks. Loudspeakers sometimes warned the crews the night before to be prepared. But this had to be stopped. The strain of waiting, the anticipated terror, made vivid from past experience, sent many men into hysteria and insanity.

Ashore, bloody, slogging progress gained inches of the Shuri



Explosions, smoke and tracer fill the sky at

Line. But the Japanese defences were still intact, and on 22nd May the commanding general of the 3rd Amphibious Corps reported that the marines were encountering the most effective artillery fire yet met in the Pacific. The "plum rains" deluged Okinawa; tanks were bogged down and ammunition and fuel were moved to the front in amphibious vehicles. Midget submarines and suicide boats joined the *Kamikazes* in harassment of the fleet.

Then the Japanese bombed the American airstrips and followed up with an airborne landing. Five bombers tried to make it: four were shot down, the fifth made a belly landing and ten Japanese jumped out and began to shoot up the district. Before their riddled bodies lined the airstrip they had destroyed seven planes, damaged twenty-six others and ignited 70,000 gallons of petrol.

The *Kamikazes* came again in swarms on 27th May, and 115 enemy planes were shot down that day. The destroyer *Drexler* sank, and a long list of other ships were damaged.

American and Japanese forces clash off Okinawa

By the end of May the flower of the 32nd Japanese Army, 50,000 men, lay dead in the shell-pocked debris of its fortifications, and Lieutenant General Mitsuru Ushijima withdrew his remaining troops for a last "back-to-the-sea" stand in the south. The American flag now flew above the site of Shuri Castle, the strong point of the Japanese line.

But the end was not yet. On 3rd June the *Kamikazes* came in eighteen raids by seventy-five planes. On 4th June Nature joined the malevolent forces of the enemy; a typhoon tossed the invasion fleet like chips upon rapids, sheared off the bow of the cruiser *Pittsburgh* and damaged the carrier *Hornet* and eight other ships. On 5th June the *Mississippi* and *Louisville* were struck by suiciders.

Although victory was in sight, there were still a lot of men to die, among them the principal commanders on both sides. Lieutenant-General Simon Bolivar Buckner, who commanded the 10th American Army, died on 18th June from a Japanese shellburst.

On 21st June General Ushijima and his Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Isamu Cho, died the ceremonial death of *hara-kiri*.

That same night the world was told that organized resistance had ceased on Okinawa. The next morning, as the band played "The Star-Spangled Banner," the colour guard raised the American flag over the blood-drenched island. "A sudden breeze swept the flag out full against a blue and quiet sky."

There have been larger land battles, more protracted air campaigns than Okinawa. But Okinawa was a combined operation unparalleled in size, scope and ferocity, a no-quarter struggle fought on, under and over the sea and the land.

Besides their 110,000 dead, the Japanese lost sixteen combat ships, including the *Yamato*; tens of thousands of tons of commercial shipping sunk by patrol planes; 7,830 planes destroyed, another 2,655 lost in operational accidents.

US air losses, including those of the big air force bombers which smashed at Japanese fields, were 768 planes. Of the 12,281 American dead, 5,000 were navy men. US Navy ship casualties were thirty-six lost and 368 damaged, and of this number twenty-six were sunk and 164 damaged by *Kamikazes*. But nothing larger than a destroyer was lost to the enemy, and of the larger ships damaged, all except an escort carrier were ultimately repaired, most of them quickly.

"The fleet that came to stay" and made Okinawa's conquest possible gave far more than it received. The simple accolade applied to the brave men of the little ships, ". . . they stuck it out with demonstrated valour," is equally applicable to all those of Okinawa, dead and living, who fought in the greatest battle of US arms. But to the little ships of the radar picket-line belongs a special glory. They bore the overwhelming share of death and destruction; they were the thin and bloodstained line that stood between the Sons of Heaven and the dominion of the East China Sea.

Condensed from The New York Times Magazine

Germany Was Bombed to Defeat

By Allan Michie

DURING THE closing months of the war I took a close look at twenty-nine of Germany's bombed cities, flying low over them or clambering through the ruins. I interviewed factory managers and local government officials, to try to discover just how much Allied bombing had hurt Germany. Perhaps 100 key cities took the brunt of our attacks. There is no doubt that their suffering was appalling.

Mere words are inadequate to describe the fearful retribution that overtook Hitler's Reich. Millions of houses were gutted or smashed to fragments (of Dortmund's 50,000 houses, for example, only 2,500 were habitable at the end of the war); thousands of factories, large and small, were destroyed or put out of production; utilities and transport systems had come to a standstill. Millions of Germans were living a troglodyte existence in cellars. Thousands of bodies lay under piles of brick and stone.

As early as October 1943, official German figures conceded that 1,200,000 civilians had been killed or were missing in air raids. No one knows to what awful total that figure had climbed by VE-Day, because the statistics were destroyed in Berlin's air raids.

In June 1945 Berlin no longer existed as a city. Hamburg was eighty-five per cent destroyed. Official German figures show that 20,000 died, and 60,000 were injured in Hamburg on the night of 25th July 1943, when a fire-bomb inferno raged through the dock

areas. Nazi officials tore off their uniforms and ran into hiding to escape the enraged survivors. The inner city of Cologne was almost 100 per cent destroyed. Bremen was half wiped out.

The combined damaged areas of London, Bristol, Coventry and all the blitzed cities of Britain could be dumped in the ruins of just one medium-sized German city and hardly be noticed. The raid on Coventry in 1940 marked the peak of Luftwaffe destructiveness; and there the Germans dropped 200 tons of bombs. Using that as a standard Berlin suffered 363 Coventrys, Cologne 269, Hamburg 200 and Bremen 137.

The Ruhr was the largest single concentration of heavy industry and coal mines in the world. And it was a vulnerable air target, within easy reach. The Germans couldn't move these heavy industries to safer areas. Nor has anyone yet been able to put huge steel mills underground.

Hundreds of night fighters and 2,000 anti-aircraft guns guarded the approaches to this vital area. Continuous industrial haze provided a perpetual smoke screen. Fifty target decoys using dummy buildings and false fires were set up round the Ruhr and west of the Rhine to lure British night bombers away from the area, into the open countryside.

Against these obstacles the RAF did comparatively little damage for a time. In fact Germany's war potential increased year by year right up to the beginning of 1944, although the turning point came in March 1943 when Bomber Command began to make use of new blind-bombing devices, target-indicator flares and marking devices. Two years later the last Ruhr chimney stopped smoking.

Dr. Paul Maulick, managing director of the syndicate to which all German steel mills belonged, admitted that bombing reduced German steel production from 20,000,000 tons per year in 1941 to *practically nothing* in 1945. Damage to railway and canal communications all over Germany prevented transport of raw materials and cut the production of steel by eighty per cent, while direct hits on the furnaces finished it off.

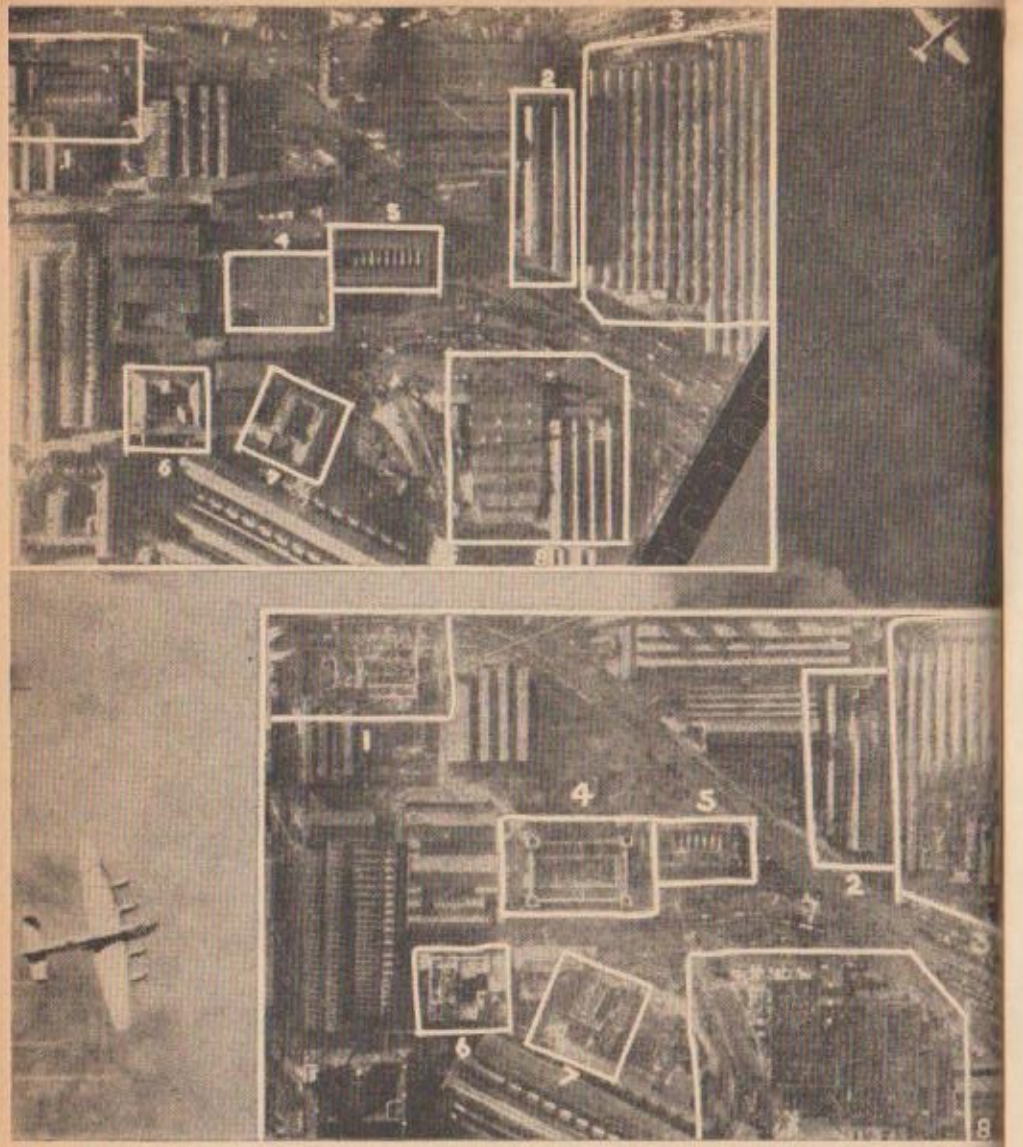
"In the end," he admitted, "we couldn't continue to repair the railways because we needed steel to make rails; and we couldn't produce steel because the railways couldn't bring ore and coal to supply the furnaces."

HEART of the Ruhr was Krupp's gigantic factory at Essen. The first gun this factory ever produced for the Berlin government was a cast steel three-pounder, ordered in April 1844. Exactly 100 years later the last gun left the Krupp workshops. Krupp specialists had been designing mammoth guns to shell Britain, possibly London, from the French coast. How near they came to success could be seen in 1945 amid the ruins of the heavy gun shops, where colossal mortar and gun barrels lay twisted from high explosives.

An RAF bomb in the middle of 1944 destroyed the safe in the laboratory of Krupp's chief of construction, Professor Erich Müller, where plans of great guns and new V-weapons were stored. By the time new plans could be drawn in safer laboratories in Silesia and Austria and sent back to Krupp, the tool sheds had been wiped out by bombs.

Under cover of bad weather, Krupp's attempted to rebuild half the ruined plant in the winter of 1943–4. But a single raid in March 1944 undid three months repair work. Five more frantic months of reconstruction ensued, then the bombers again attacked. One bomb cut the main water supply line from the Ruhr River to the plant, and steel production dropped from 42,000 tons daily to nothing in a few hours. This was the end; not one of the twenty-eight departments produced anything more.

Krupp's personnel manager, when I questioned him, hotly denied that the factory's workers were guilty of absenteeism after heavy air attacks, but Krupp's production charts give him the lie. Throughout 1943–4 work in every department was held up because of "non-arrival of workers." Charts show, for example, that eight per cent of the potential work hours in April 1944 were lost during alarms and raids, and an additional twenty per cent were



Air Ministry reconnaissance photographs of the Krupp armaments factory at Essen taken before and after the heavy RAF raid in March 1943. Major damage has been inflicted on an assembly shop (1); machine shops (2, 3, 4, 5); administrative offices (6); the foundry (7) and furnaces (8)

lost when workers failed to show up because they had been bombed out, stranded without transport, were injured or ill, or deliberately absented themselves.

WHEN British Lancasters broke the Möhne Dam in May 1943, one of the great exploits of the war, they not only flooded the coal mines and put most of Dortmund under water, but—a fact only revealed by Krupp's records—they also shut down for lack of electric current Krupp's great rolling mill, fifty miles away.

Rivalling the Krupp empire as a producer of armaments was Germany's huge Rheinmetall-Borsig, at Düsseldorf. Not a single building of Rheinmetall-Borsig was left with roof or walls intact at the end of the war. One thousand special factory firemen fought a losing battle against incendiaries which burnt out what high explosives didn't destroy. Great steel pillboxes intended to defend the Atlantic Wall against invasion, massive armoured cupolas fitted with guns for the Siegfried Line, huge seventy-five ton armoured turrets for heavy battle cruisers—all lay twisted and blasted amid the wreckage.

Lying about like super ninepins in another section of the plant, I came across fantastic mortars, more than twenty-three inches in calibre, and scores of their shells, which weighed 4,000 pounds each. Only seven of these mortars had been produced when the RAF raids smashed the place.

The United States 8th Air Force was ordered in 1943 to destroy the Luftwaffe fighter force on the ground and in the air. The Luftwaffe had begun a building programme to quadruple its fighter force. It had to be paralysed if there was to be any successful invasion of Europe.

The 8th had some discouraging times but it fought on. Blessed providentially by six days of unheard-of clear weather in February 1944, it delivered devastating attacks on five German aircraft factories and destroyed production accounting for seventy-five per cent of Germany's total fighter output. In the first five

months of 1944 the back of the Luftwaffe was broken, and on D-Day General Eisenhower could confidently tell his men when they embarked for Normandy, "Don't worry about planes overhead. They will be ours." They were.

Except for sporadic sorties and an occasional defence of a target of highest priority, the Luftwaffe was out of the air from Normandy to the Elbe. A captured German soldier said the German Army had coined a new method of aircraft identification. "If we see silver planes, they are American," he said. "If they are black, they're British. If we can't see them at all, they're the Luftwaffe."

The 8th Air Force was also given the job of destroying Germany's synthetic oil plants, and by November 1944 every such plant in the Ruhr was out of production. In the files at Hitler's headquarters there was a letter dated 16th September 1944, from Albert Speer, Reichsminister of War Production, to Reichsleiter Bormann, Hitler's deputy:

> The idea is spreading that reconstruction of synthetic oil plants and refineries is purposeless, since the enemy always finds a suitable moment, soon after resumption of work, to destroy these installations again by air attack. We must not allow ourselves to give up hope. All resources must combine for the reconstruction of synthetic plants and refineries. Heil Hitler!

But all Speer's efforts and an army of German and slave workers could not put together what the bombers had knocked down. In November 1944, General Stumpff, responsible for the fighter defence of the Fatherland, had to issue drastic orders: no petrol was available for training flights, and active-service flights could be made only in defence of highest priority targets.

The effects of these cuts were soon seen. German fighter pilots, sent into battle after only 150 hours flying training, were knocked out of the skies.

The synthetic oil factory at Leuna, west of Leipzig, the largest in Germany, was the most heavily defended industrial plant in the Reich. It was protected by a smoke screen thirty miles in perimeter and by upward of 450 heavy ack-ack guns. Leuna was raided by Allied bombers twenty-one times, and production dropped to

On 17th May 1943, RAF Bomber Command scored one of its greatest triumphs—the raid of the Dam Busters on the Moehne Dam

This photograph, taken after the attack, shows the extent of the damage: the lake has a new shoreline (top left) as water rushes through the 200-feet wide breach, obliterating the power station, swamping roads and turning agricultural land into fields of silt

about a quarter of capacity. Bombing this one plant deprived the Wehrmacht of enough petrol to operate twelve armoured divisions for three months.

In the Ruhr I visited what was left of Germany's first synthetic oil plant. According to Dr. Karl Eugen Spanier, chief technical director, his plant received an urgent message from the German High Command immediately following D-Day: "Unless oil production is increased immediately, the Luftwaffe will be grounded by the end of the year." Special bonuses were offered to research workers to speed up the processes. But on 15th June 1944, a week after D-Day, bombs heavily damaged the research laboratories. The next day another raid knocked the heart out of the factory. After eight weeks, frenzied repair work got it back into partial operation. Then came other heavy raids. No more production ever came from that factory.

Medium and fighter bombers, as well as the heavies, were turned loose against Germany's intricate network of railways and canals. By the end of 1944 rail traffic out of the Ruhr had been reduced by seventy-five per cent. When the Dortmund-Ems canal was cut, coal stocks piled up at the Ruhr mines and caused severe coal shortages all over the rest of Germany.

According to official German figures, 2,000,000 foreign slave labourers, in addition to the regular German railway workers, were employed in repairing railway damage. Fritz Knickenberg, chief inspector of the great Hamm marshalling yards, supervised 4,000 railway men plus 8,000 labourers who were constantly employed on rail repairs.

"From 1943 onward," said Knickenberg, "your bombers were far more punctual than our trains, and after January 1945 our repair gangs were unable to cope with the damage." By March 1945, when the Germans were desperately trying to assemble forces in the Ruhr to halt the Allied armies' advance, loaded troop trains sat on sidings for three to ten days, waiting for locomotives to move them.

It was a newspaperman who supplied the apt definition, "tactical bombing is knocking over the milk pail every day, while strategic bombing is an effort to kill the cow." The day-to-day job of knocking over the milk pail was generally left to the Allied tactical air force which operated from just behind the front lines.

Captured Germans and their documents reveal that German troops and material were constantly thwarted in their attempts to reach the fronts where they were desperately needed. Two German divisions were ordered from Bordeaux to Normandy to help stem the Allied invasion. There was no petrol available, and it took fourteen days for the divisions to reach the Normandy battlefront by foot and horse transport.

The 1st Panzer Division took ten days to get from Ghent, Belgium, to Normandy because of detours forced by blasted bridges. German troops were ordered from the Russian fronts to Normandy. They moved by rail as far as the Rhine. Then they started for the Seine on foot. They arrived just in time to be swept up by the advancing Allied forces.

"Every ton of bombs dropped on Germany's industries will save the lives of ten Allied soldiers when the invasion comes," said Air Chief Marshal Harris, head of Bomber Command, in 1943. The casualty count from D-Day to VE-Day is the proof of his prediction. The Allied armies were able to reach the centre of Germany without the long-drawn agonies and the fearful casualties of the First World War.

But the aerial battle of Germany was not won without great cost. In Bomber Command alone, 56,000 men lost their lives.

Condensed from Skyways

Adolf Hitler's Last Days

By Frederic Sondern

THREE WEEKS after the collapse of Nazi Germany, Major Ivan Nikitine, deputy chief of the Soviet Security Police, reported in Berlin that the Fuehrer had neither shot himself in his underground shelter nor been cremated near by as generally believed—if, indeed, he had perished at all. That was the start of rumours, still half-believed, that Hitler was not dead.

An immediate, exhaustive inquiry was ordered by Allied Intelligence in 1945, and the details of Hitler's last days were gradually reconstructed. The twenty-eight people who had been close to the Fuehrer during the Battle of Berlin and had been captured by Western Allied forces were questioned and their stories checked and cross-checked. Mountains of documents were studied. The true story of the dictator's end was slowly pieced together.

At approximately 2.30 on the afternoon of 30th April 1945, Adolf Hitler sat down beside his wife in the underground *Führerbunker*, put the barrel of a Walther automatic into his mouth and pulled the trigger, while Eva Hitler bit into a vial of cyanide. At 10.30 that night what little remained of their bodies—which had been repeatedly drenched with petrol and burnt in the Chancellery garden—was buried by General Rattenhuber and a detail of Elite Guardsmen. All night long an artillery barrage from the Russian lines churned up the whole area. Hitler's bones were scattered as his Thousand-Year Reich had been.

THE BEGINNING of the end was the Fuehrer's birthday—20th April 1945. In the *Führerbunker*, fifty feet below the surface of the Chancellery garden, the chiefs of the German armed forces and the Nazi Party had gathered to pay their respects to the Supreme War Lord. Boots shone and decorations glittered, but most of the faces were haggard. The decimated German armies were falling back on every front. The Russians threatened Berlin; the Western Allies had crossed the Elbe and were racing to meet them.

Since his narrow escape ten months before from the Generals' Plot and the brief-case bomb attempt on his life, Hitler had suddenly become an old man, stooped and hunched, dragging one foot and with a noticeable tremor in his left arm. But his voice was as incisive, his eyes as bright, as ever.

In the conference that followed, the satraps could hardly believe their ears. When Field-Marshal Wilhelm Keitel hesitatingly tried to point out the gravity of the situation, Hitler impatiently swept him aside. "Nonsense," he rasped. "The Russians will meet their bloodiest defeat yet before the impregnable gates of Berlin. And then we will roll the Allies back into the sea." The mesmeric eyes swept over them and no one moved.

Reichsmarschall Hermann Goering broke the spell for a few moments. Germany would inevitably triumph, said the corpulent master of the once-mighty Luftwaffe, but it would be safer for the Fuehrer to direct his troops from the mountain fastness of Berchtesgaden. Hitler glared. "What you are really recommending," he snapped, "is that *you* should leave for a safer place. You may go, by all means." In stony silence, Goering saluted with his jewelled marshal's baton and took his leave; a few minutes later, followed by a convoy of fast trucks loaded with treasure, his armoured Mercedes was streaking for Bavaria and, he thought, safety. Hitler had turned back to his maps and was explaining his strategy. "We knew," one veteran general said later, "that most of the divisions with which he was manoeuvring were no longer effective units. But listening to him, most of us felt there might still be a chance."

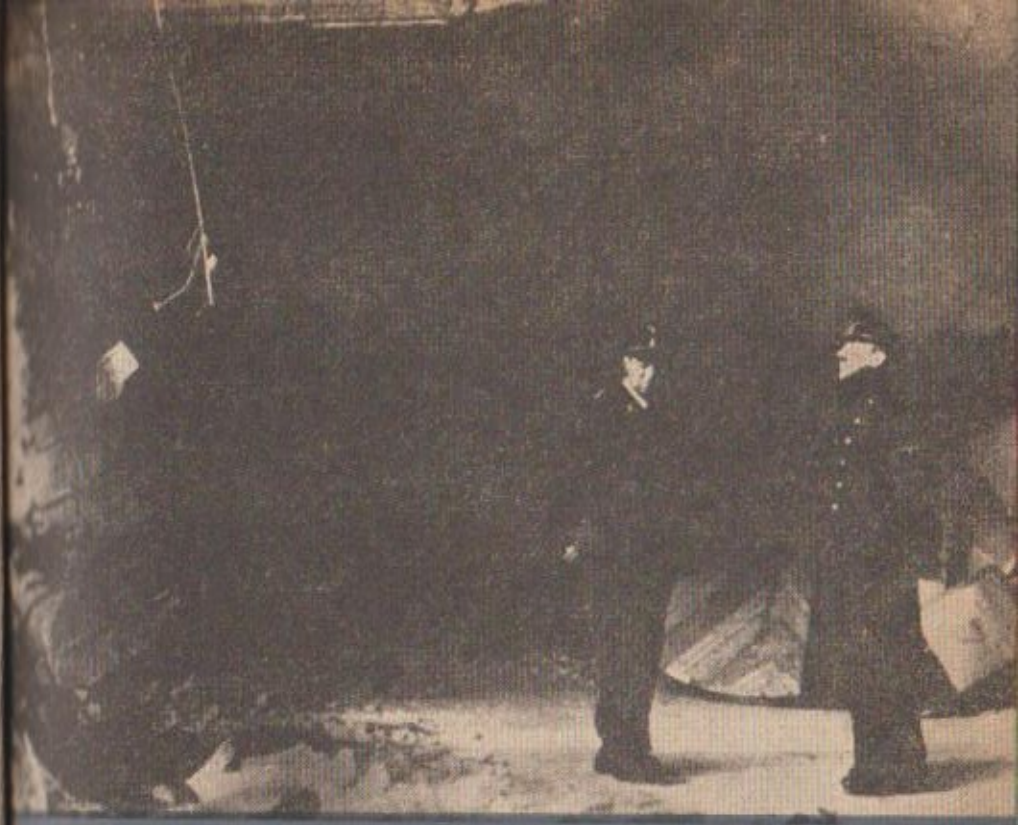
There was one man in the *Führerbunker* that day who could shake off the hysteria that Hitler had induced and who was primarily interested in his people's welfare; Albert Speer, Minister of Armaments, the brilliant industrial brain of the Reich. He had repeatedly produced the impossible in guns, planes and tanks.

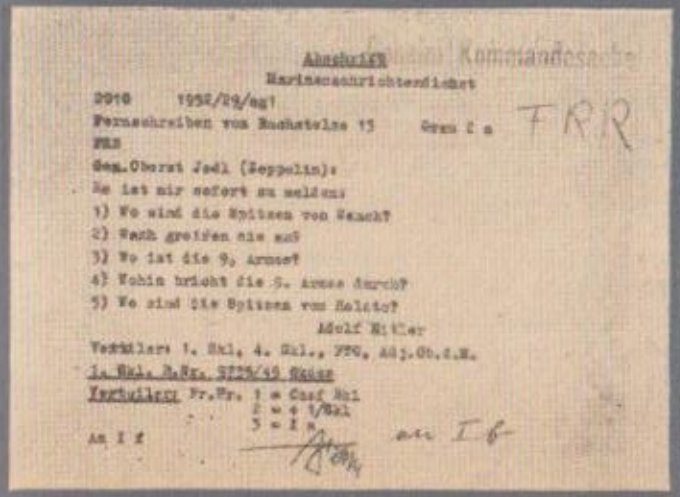
Early in March, Speer had discovered Hitler's terrible plan for the annihilation of the Reich in the event of defeat. Detailed orders had gone to all District Party Leaders to destroy, as Allied troops advanced, all important industrial plants, public utilities, mines and stores of food and clothing. The military were instructed to blow up all key bridges, railway and canal installations, ships and locomotives. Speer made a whirlwind tour of the country and persuaded key Gauleiters and generals to hold up the execution of Hitler's decree. Speer picked Hitler's birthday as his best opportunity for a final plea. "Should the German people give up," the Fuehrer had said, with a cold stare, "they would demonstrate that they have no moral worth. They would deserve destruction."

Speer decided that he would sabotage the Leader's holocaust if it cost him his life. At the risk of a Gestapo hand on his shoulder, he rocketed round Germany again. Gauleiter Karl Kaufmann of Hamburg promised that the all-important port would not be demolished; others nervously followed suit. To cripple the fanatics, Speer ordered all high explosives not in military hands to be put into wells and flooded mine shafts. That order saved many hundreds of industrial plants.

Meanwhile, Hitler had completed elaborate plans to throw the Russians back from Berlin. The counter-attack was to be led by SS General Felix Steiner. "Any officer who keeps a single man back from this operation," Hitler screamed into the telephone, "will forfeit his life within five hours."

On the afternoon of 22nd April the Fuehrer announced to his staff the first victory of the new campaign. Heinrich Himmler, sycophantic leader of the SS, had reported by telephone that Steiner's offensive was in full swing and that Russian troops were





Abschrift Kommandosache
Marinenachrichtendienst
2010 1952/29/ag1
Fernschreiben von Buchstelle 15 Gruppe I a
FRR
Gen.Oberst Jodl (Zeppelin):
Es ist mir sofort zu melden:
1) Wo sind die Spitzen von Wenck?
2) Wann greifen sie an?
3) Wo ist die 9. Armee?
4) Wohin bricht die 9. Armee durch?
5) Wo sind die Spitzen von Holste?
Adolf Hitler
Verteiler: 1. Skl, 4. Skl., FHQ, Adj.Ob.d.M.
Ia Skl. Nr. 3725/45 Kdos
Verteiler: Fr.Nr. 1 = Chef Skl
2 = 4 1/Skl
3 = I a
An I f

April 1945 . . . and Hitler's world is crashing in ruins around him. With him in this photograph—probably the last to be taken of the Fuehrer alive—is his aide, Julius Schaub

A telegram to General Jodl conveys the Fuehrer's panic: "Where are Wenck's spearheads? When will they attack? Where is the 9th Army? Where will the 9th Army break through? Where are Holste's spearheads?"

falling back from Berlin. Then several messages were laid in rapid succession in front of Colonel-General Alfred Jodl, Chief of Operations. For several minutes, Jodl could not bring himself to speak. Then Hitler noticed his face. "Well? Well?" he demanded. "*Mein Führer,*" said Jodl, "Steiner has *not* attacked. Marshal Zhukov's armour is reported in Berlin."

Hitler stared straight ahead, his face a slowly purpling mask. "The SS," he whispered. "I have been betrayed by the SS! First the army, then the Luftwaffe, and now the SS. Traitors—all of you!" he roared. "Dogs of traitors!"

For three hours Hitler raged on. Finally, he staggered back to his chair. "The Third Reich has failed," he gasped hoarsely. "Nothing remains except for me to die. I shall remain here and wait for the end. Then I shall shoot myself. There's nothing left to fight with. Get Goering to negotiate with the Allies."

The Fuehrer's words were reported to Goering, who by a Law of Succession promulgated by the Fuehrer in 1941 had been established as Hitler's successor. The fat, pleasure-loving marshal was positive he would be able to talk the Allies into reasonable surrender terms and, at the worst, be banished himself into a comfortable exile. He radioed:

Mein Führer—In view of your decision, do you agree that I take over the total leadership of the Reich? If no reply from you is received by ten tonight, I shall take it for granted.

Goering ordered his bodyguard to be increased to 1,000 men and announced to his staff that he would fly to see General Eisenhower on the following day. But just as he was composing a message to the American Supreme Commander, a wire arrived:

Goering—What you did calls for the death sentence. I shall not insist on proceedings if you voluntarily resign from your offices. Otherwise I shall take appropriate steps.

Adolf Hitler

Goering was staring incredulously at this when the jackboots of an SS squad rang on the flagstones outside. The Reichsmarschall was under arrest. Hitler had no intention of having a successor.

Within an hour of his dramatic farewell in the *Führerbunker*, Hitler had begun to plan for the greatest funeral pyre in history. Calm and precise, he ordered General Wenck's XII Army, engaging the Americans, to move back to the capital. Meanwhile, every man and boy in Berlin should be sent to the barricades to stem the Russian advance; shirkers would be hanged on the spot.

Hearing the order, one veteran Party stalwart, Gauleiter Wegener, in charge of all civil affairs for northern Germany, managed to get Hitler on the telephone. If the Fuehrer, he pleaded, would only authorize surrender in the west to the British and Americans, the Russians could be held back until an armistice was arranged and much devastation could be avoided. "Devastation, Wegener," replied Hitler, "is just what I want. The better to illuminate my finish." The next day, 25th April, the Russians had completely encircled Berlin.

During the last seven days in the *Führerbunker*, the group round the Fuehrer had grown small. Goebbels and his wife had brought their six children—whom they later murdered before committing suicide themselves. Martin Bormann, Hitler's political right-hand man, had elected to stay. Eva Braun, who was the Fuehrer's mistress for so many years without Germany's knowledge, refused to leave. In the two steel-and-concrete warrens adjoining Hitler's were twenty-six high officers and thirty secretaries and guards.

As the shells of the Russian guns came closer and began to shake the bunkers, "everybody gradually began to go mad." Liquor flowed like water while stiff Prussian generals took off their tunics and danced crazily with their secretaries.

Hitler himself brooded over his maps and held conferences. Discovering that the Russians might be able to advance through an arm of the Berlin underground railway which passed not far from the

Chancellery, he ordered his Chief of Staff to have the tube flooded. "*Mein Führer,*" protested General Krebs, "we have several thousand of our wounded in that tube. . . ."

Hitler interrupted him with a snarl: "Flood the tube!" A few minutes later, the valves were opened.

Finally, on 28th April, a Press dispatch from Stockholm brought to the Fuehrer reported that Heinrich Himmler—chief of the SS—was negotiating with Count Bernadotte for the Reich's surrender to the Allies. That was the last straw. "*Und jetzt der treue Heinrich!* (And now even the faithful Heinrich!)" Hitler shrieked. But the tantrum—his last—was short. Suddenly he became calm and crisp. Himmler's betrayal shattered any further hope of resistance. This was the end.

The last two days in the *Führerbunker* were the strangest of all. Early on the morning of 29th April Hitler and Eva Braun were married in a short, simple ceremony while Russian shells crashed into the Chancellery almost over their heads and sent down a rain of plaster from the roof of the bunker. Then Hitler dictated to his secretary his "political last will and testament." The document contains nothing he had not said many times before. Striking Goering and Himmler from the Party rolls, he appointed Admiral Karl Dönitz to succeed him.

Later he read, in the digest of the news that was brought to him as usual, a detailed account of Mussolini's death before a partisan firing squad and the public exhibition of his and Clara Petacci's bodies, hung up by their feet, in a Milan square. Hitler had already given instructions that his and Eva's bodies should be completely destroyed after their suicide, but he now repeated his orders: "Completely destroyed, do you understand? Completely."

At the regular staff conference that afternoon, he quietly received the report of the Russian advance: The Chancellery would be attacked directly on 1st May at the latest.

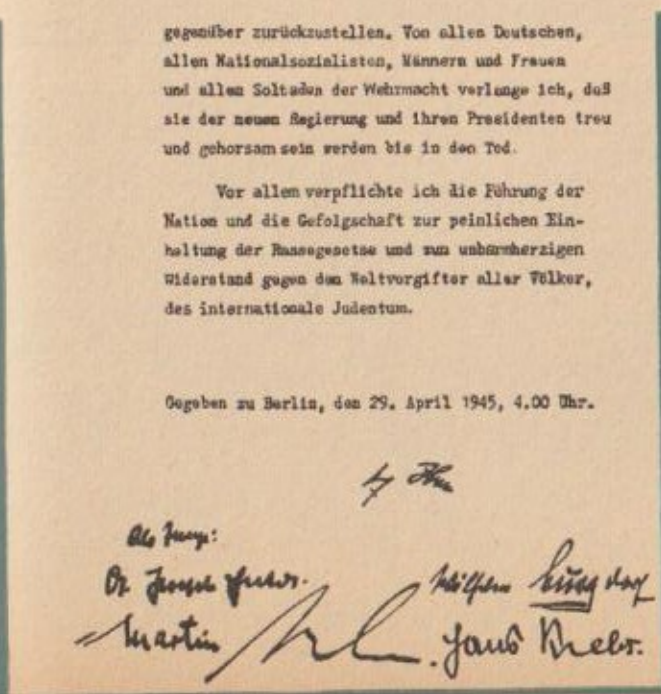
"Then we haven't much time," he said. "They mustn't take me alive under any circumstances."

Late that night an orderly summoned everyone to the main bunker. The Fuehrer wished to say good-bye. When they were assembled, Hitler shook hands silently with each in turn.

"His eyes were glazed," one witness said. "He already seemed far away."

Afterwards, back in the staff canteen, the storm broke. Someone seized a bottle and jumped up on a table. "Here's to the dead!" he yelled. Someone else started the gramophone. The dance, more and more uproarious, lasted well into the morning. Messages came from the *Führerbunker* ordering quiet, but no one paid any attention.

At two o'clock on 30th April, Hitler had his lunch as usual. He was pale and quiet, but ate with apparent enjoyment. Then he and his wife went out to the main corridor where Bormann, Goebbels and the principal aides were waiting. They shook hands silently and returned to their suite. The door slammed and one of the Fuehrer's bodyguard planted himself in front of it. A moment later, a shot crashed. The Thousand-Year Reich had come to an end.



gegenüber zurückzustellen. Von allen Deutschen, allen Nationalsozialisten, Männern und Frauen und allen Soldaten der Wehrmacht verlange ich, daß sie der neuen Regierung und ihren Presidenten treu und gehorsam sein werden bis in den Tod.

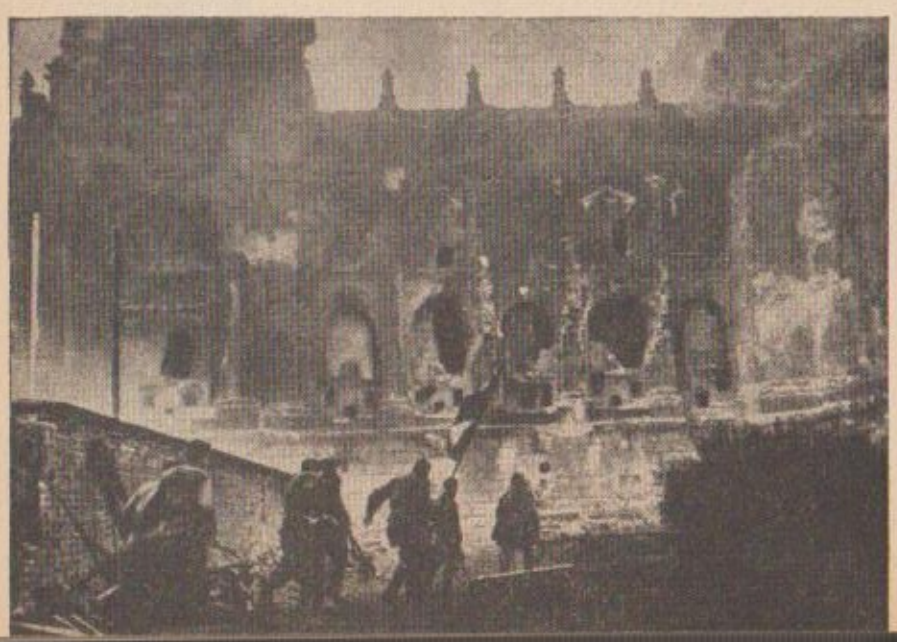
Vor allem verpflichte ich die Führung der Nation und die Gefolgschaft zur peinlichen Einhaltung der Rassegesetze und zum unbarmherzigen Widerstand gegen den Weltvergifter aller Völker, des internationale Judentum.

Gegeben zu Berlin, den 29. April 1945, 4.00 Uhr.

Als Zeugen:

With his strange, tortured signature witnessed by Dr. Joseph Goebbels, Martin Bormann, Wilhelm Burgdorf and Hans Krebs, Hitler puts a last message of hate in his will:
"I pledge the leaders of the nation and the people to meticulous observance of racial law, and to mercilessly withstanding the poisoning of the peoples of the world by international Jewry"

The sound of Red Army artillery and tanks closing in on Berlin (above) finally convinced Hitler that his evil reign was over. In 1942 the Russians had turned the desperate defence of Stalingrad (right) into an advance that ended with the Red Flag being carried into Berlin's ruined Reichstag



On 4th May 1945, in an army tent on Luneburg Heath, Field-Marshal Montgomery took the surrender of the Nazi forces in north-west Germany

Instrument of surrender

of

All German armed forces in HOLLAND, in

northwest Germany including all islands,

and in DENMARK.

1. The German Command agrees to the surrender of all German armed forces in HOLLAND, in northwest GERMANY including the FRISIAN ISLANDS and HELIGOLAND and all other islands, in SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN, and in DENMARK, to the C.-in-C. 21 Army Group. This to include all naval ships in these areas. These forces to lay down their arms and to surrender unconditionally.

2. All hostilities on land, on sea, or in the air by German forces in the above areas to cease at 0800 hrs. British Double Summer Time on Saturday 5 May 1945.

3. The German command to carry out at once, and without argument or comment, all further orders that will be issued by the Allied Powers on any subject.

4. Disobedience of orders, or failure to comply with them, will be regarded as a breach of these surrender terms and will be dealt with by the Allied Powers in accordance with the accepted laws and usages of war.

5. This instrument of surrender is independent of, without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by or on behalf of the Allied Powers and applicable to Germany and the German armed forces as a whole.

6. This instrument of surrender is written in English and in German.

The English version is the authentic text.

7. The decision of the Allied Powers will be final if any doubt or dispute arises as to the meaning or interpretation of the surrender terms.

B. L. Montgomery
Field-Marshal

4 am May 1945
1830 hrs

Europe at the end of the war

The Great Nazi Counterfeit Plot

By Major George McNally
(with Frederic Sondern)

A FEW DAYS after the surrender of Hitler's armies, an excited Allied counter-espionage officer in Austria telephoned my office in Frankfurt. A German captain, he reported, had handed over a lorry loaded with millions of pounds'-worth of English bank-notes. Huge amounts of currency, he added, were floating about in the Enns River; householders and Allied troops were busy fishing it out.

At that time my job was to protect Allied troops in Europe from the counterfeiting of currency which always thrives during military invasions and occupations. This report from Austria startled and puzzled me, so I immediately set off for the place where the German captain and his lorry had been taken. There, in twenty-three stout boxes about the size of coffins, were bundles and bundles of Bank of England notes. A quick tally—helped by lists tacked inside the cover of each case—showed that it totalled no less than £21 million.

It was impossible for me to determine, even under a powerful magnifying glass, whether the notes were genuine or not. I telephoned my British colleagues in Frankfurt, and shortly afterwards had a telephone call direct from the Bank of England. When I described the find, there was a long-drawn gasp at the other end of the line. Soon a representative of the Bank arrived from London—a tall, angular and reserved gentleman named P. J. Reeves.

We took Reeves to the heavily guarded room where the treasure

was deposited, and he began going from box to box, fluttering the notes through his fingers. Finally he stopped and stared silently into space. Then for several seconds he swore, slowly and methodically, in a quiet voice, but with vehemence.

"Sorry," he said at last. "But the people who made this stuff have cost us so much."

And so Reeves, three Scotland Yard detectives and I collaborated in piecing together the story of Operation Bernhard, the biggest hoax that one government had ever perpetrated on another.

First, I was told that during 1943 an alarming number of counterfeit English bank-notes had been finding their way to London from Zürich, Lisbon, Stockholm and other neutral centres. They had begun to come in batches of £100,000 or more, and the quality of the fakes had been improving steadily. Soon it was clear to the Bank's experts that the notes were being manufactured by highly skilled craftsmen and distributed by a remarkably efficient gang.

Then a German spy was arrested in Edinburgh. The suit-case he carried was stuffed with bank-notes—the finest forged money the Bank of England had ever seen.

The Bank now realized that it was up against the German Government itself, and that the very credit of Britain might well be at stake. For decades banks all over the world had been using Bank of England notes almost like gold; frightened Europeans and Asiatics had hoarded them against bad days. Now hundreds of thousands of pounds of forged British money were circulating outside Britain. If doubt were cast on the integrity of these notes in neutral and Allied countries, particularly in the middle of a war, the result might prove extremely dangerous to Britain and to the Allied cause. So the Bank had to bow to the inevitable.

With little background information, we began a search for the men and machinery behind the huge counterfeiting operation.

Finding the machinery was, as it happened, not difficult. The German captain who had surrendered the boxes of bank-notes told us he had received them from an SS officer whose lorry had broken

down near the village of Redl Zipf. He had been instructed to dump them in a near-by lake. That was all the captain knew. We went to Redl Zipf—and discovered one of the underground networks of storage corridors and workshops that honeycombed the Alpine Redoubt where the Nazis had intended to make their last stand. There, in Gallery 16—a 200-foot-long tunnel stretching off a big shaft bored into a mountain—we found bank-note presses and other machinery. But no plates, no paper, no records. "Now," said Reeves, "we have to find the chaps who ran this place."

Inquiries in Redl Zipf revealed that all the men who had worked in the subterranean factory had been taken to the extermination camp at Ebensee, forty miles away, a few days before the German surrender. We got to Ebensee quickly. But every one of the forgers was gone. The commandant there had pretended to accept the order to gas all 140 men, but had taken no action. When the camp was liberated by the Allies, the counterfeiters had simply walked out.

Fortunately, the camp records had been kept with typical German precision, even through the last mad days of the Reich. The names and birthplaces of this strange band were listed. Then began a search which took us to the four corners of the former Nazi empire.

One by one we rounded up more than forty of the most important of the counterfeiters. Little by little, we checked and pieced together their sometimes almost incredible testimony. And then we struck oil. From various of our witnesses, we learned that a Czech named Oskar Skala—a political prisoner of the Nazis—had been chief book-keeper of the operation. We found him, with the help of the Czechoslovak police, peacefully selling beer in a little town near Pilsen. Skala was more than co-operative. A methodical man, he had kept in a tiny notebook a day-to-day description of the work of the forgers. The final pieces of the fantastic story of Operation Bernhard fell into place.

Early in the war Heinrich Himmler had created in his innermost headquarters Office 6-F-4, an organization whose aim was to corrupt the British economy by counterfeiting English bank-notes

on a large scale. The project really got into its stride when Major Bernhard Krüger came in as executive director in 1942.

This Krüger was a young, resourceful Nazi who saw in the problems which were delaying 6-F-4 a fascinating challenge. One of the difficulties had been the recruiting of the highly skilled, specialized personnel needed for a big counterfeiting plant; the experts at the *Reichsbank* and the Reich Printing Office—most of them strait-laced old Prussian civil servants—rebelled at the idea of actually printing another nation's money, even in wartime. Krüger had a solution. A number of Germany's outstanding printing technicians were in concentration camps because of their racial origin; such men could be put to work—and be kept quiet.

Bernhard Krüger rounded up these technicians, promised them preferential treatment for the rest of their lives, and had them transported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp at Oranienburg near Berlin. There, in an isolated compound known as Block 19, surrounded by electric fences and picked guards from the notorious Deathshead Brigade sworn to absolute secrecy, Operation Bernhard got down to business.

The most advanced bank-note printing plants were set up. Plates were engraved with meticulous care. Germany's best press manufacturer interrupted war production to supply the necessary precision machinery. A paper concern, after many trials, reproduced the fine, light Bank of England paper with its elaborate watermarks.

Office 6-F-4 sent experimental batches of the Bernhard product to Gestapo representatives in German embassies and consulates in Turkey, Spain, Switzerland and Sweden with instructions to try them on the local banks. Most of the notes were accepted without question. Himmler was jubilant.

Now, as the notes came off the presses, they were meticulously inspected and graded. Grade One notes, the best, were distributed by 6-F-4 for purchases in neutral countries and as operation money for the more important of Himmler's spies and saboteurs abroad. Grade Two, which had slight imperfections but were still excellent

forgeries, were distributed to Gestapo units in occupied countries to buy information and subsidize collaborators, who liked to have Bank of England notes at hand in case anything went wrong.

Grade Three notes, still an extremely deceptive forgery, were accumulated and stored for an especially fantastic project of Himmler's: they were to be dumped on the British Isles from planes. Himmler's hope was that people all over the country would pick them up and try to use them, thus confronting the government and the banks with the problem of separating the good from the bad without causing an economic upset. Fortunately, by the time enough notes were available, the Luftwaffe had been driven from the air over Britain and the project was dropped.

One of the outstanding victims of Krüger's Grade One money was the now-famous "Cicero"—the Albanian professional spy Eliaza Bazna, who was valet to the British Ambassador in Ankara during the war, and who became, he thought, the highest-paid spy in history when he received £300,000 from German Intelligence for secrets he filched from the Ambassador's safe. Another, more typical victim, was a Swiss businessman who accepted in good faith British notes worth about £60,000 from a Turkish bank. The pounds were accepted in turn by a Swiss bank, and eventually worked their way through several other neutral countries to the Bank of England. There Major Krüger's product was finally detected by an alert cashier. In some cases, however, Sachsenhausen Grade One notes actually went from Germany to a neutral country, from there to Britain, back to another neutral country, and finally back to Germany—without detection at any point along the way.

Even though Operation Bernhard flourished, Major Krüger was worried. His plant was producing 50,000 notes a month and the total stipulated by Himmler would soon be reached. The major therefore conspired with his foreman to slow down the presses and to condemn large quantities of first-class notes as faulty. "If we don't slow down," he said to his book-keeper and principal lieutenant one day, "I will be sent to the front to fight, and you will

all be shot. That would be a great pity." It was fortunate for the Bank of England that he felt like that. Several hundred thousand Grade One notes which might have been circulated were secretly packed away in big wooden boxes at Krüger's orders.

But now the tide of war was turning. Berlin was being bombed more heavily every day, and Sachsenhausen was within the target area. Himmler wanted to shut down Operation Bernhard, but Krüger persuaded his chief to let him move the plant and men to one of the new underground factories in the Redoubt Area of the Austrian Alps. The major argued that in case of a collapse, Office 6-F-4 could be extremely useful to good Nazis by providing foreign money and expertly forged credentials of every kind.

The transfer from Sachsenhausen took several months. It was April 1945 before Operation Bernhard was ready to set up its presses in Gallery 16 behind Redl Zipf. By that time Allied troops were already closing in on the Redoubt.

Late one afternoon Major Krüger—in a fast Alfa Romeo sports-car and accompanied by a striking blonde—roared into the concentration camp at the mouth of the Redl Zipf cave. Hurriedly he gave orders from Himmler himself. Every trace of Operation Bernhard was to be obliterated. All records were to be destroyed, forged currency and unprinted bank-note paper burnt, plates and dies sunk in near-by Lake Toplitz. All 140 technicians were to be taken to the Ebensee concentration camp and killed.

The major, still composed and polite, apologized for not being able to supervise the details himself. He had, he said, urgent business elsewhere. The Alfa Romeo was loaded with genuine Bank of England and Swiss notes—acquired, we subsequently learned from his subordinates, through black market operations in occupied capitals; its glove-box was filled with excellently forged passports. The car streaked away in the direction of Switzerland. Master Counterfeiter Krüger has never been heard of since, despite the efforts of half a dozen police forces to find him.

For three days after the major had departed, the SS officers and

the prisoners of Operation Bernhard stoked a big incinerator with records and inferior counterfeits. A squad sank the printing plates deep in Lake Toplitz. But, at the last, these men could not bring themselves to destroy the finest of the forged notes, the hoard that Krüger had set aside to avoid the appearance of over-production. As one of the counterfeiters told us later, "they were so beautiful." Coffin-sized boxes of them were loaded on lorries and the drivers were ordered to bury them for later recovery.

One of the lorry-loads was that which was handed over to us by the German captain. Some simply disappeared. Others were dumped into the Enns River by frightened SS men who only wanted to get into civilian clothes and be on their way. In the turbulent Alpine stream, these boxes of notes were broken open by the rocks—and people from round about delightedly began fishing.

Our investigation at an end, we made a tally of Operation Bernhard's total production. It was startling. According to Oskar Skala's notebook and the corroborating evidence of other Krüger workers, the major's plant turned out almost nine million Bank of England notes with a face value of approximately £140 million.

Notes worth £1,500,000 went to Turkey and the Near East; £3 million-worth were distributed by 6-F-4 in France and the Low Countries; £7,500,000 paid German bills in Spain, Portugal, Switzerland and Scandinavia. Another £37,500,000 escaped burning at Redl Zipf and was either fished out of the Enns River by Austrians, Russians, Americans and British, or cached by SS men.

For a long while Krüger masterpieces which had been salvaged and not surrendered kept turning up at British race-courses, in European black markets, even in New York banking houses.

New £5 notes—with a fine metallic thread drawn through them, and as counterfeit-proof as any money could be, replaced the old currency. By heroic effort the Bank rescued Britain's credit and staved off a desperate attempt to sabotage the Allied economy.

But for the British, and for Americans, Operation Bernhard was a near thing. And it *could* happen again.

Was This the Deadliest Error of Our Time?

By William Coughlin

BY THE SPRING of 1945 Japan had been badly beaten. Allied air attacks were destroying railways, roads and bridges faster than they could be replaced. Cities and towns were smoking ruins; millions were homeless; food was running out. The last of Japan's fleet had been destroyed.

But the military high command refused to lay down the sword and pledged itself to fight to the death. The militarists argued that they were about to win a decisive battle. General Korechika Anami, the War Minister, promised that the attackers would be driven off Okinawa.

Opposed to the militarists was a small group of diplomats who realized that Japan stood to lose more by fighting to the finish than by surrendering. Hoping to obtain better terms than unconditional surrender, they opened secret conversations with the Soviet Union, which was not then at war with Japan, seeking Russia's good offices in arranging a peace.

Early in June former Prime Minister Koki Hirota called on the Russian Ambassador, Jacob Malik. Malik was cool towards the proposals. Then on 12th July the Emperor entrusted Prince Konoye with a personal message asking for peace. Konoye's instructions were to fly to Moscow and end the war at any cost. But Stalin and Molotov begged off, saying they were busy preparing for the Potsdam Conference.

At Potsdam, Stalin mentioned casually to President Truman that the Japanese had broached the subject of negotiations. But the Soviet dictator said the Russians had brushed them off as insincere.

The Potsdam ultimatum to Japan was issued on 26th July 1945; signed by Britain, the United States and China, it demanded that Japan surrender or be crushed. The reaction among Japanese leaders was one of exultation, for the terms were far more lenient than had been expected. It promised that Japan would not be destroyed as a nation, that the Japanese would be free to choose their own government. It hinted strongly that the Emperor would be left on the throne.

The Emperor told the Foreign Minister, Shigenori Togo, without hesitation that he deemed the proclamation acceptable. The full cabinet then met to discuss the Allied ultimatum.

I have searched through many Japanese accounts of this dramatic session. All agree that the decision on 27th July was for peace. War Minister Anami and the chiefs of staff vigorously fought acceptance of the terms, but were overruled.

There were, however, several complications. What about the surrender negotiations still under way with the Russians? The latest proposal had been sent to Moscow only two days before.

There was another factor which the cabinet was forced to consider: as yet the Japanese had received news of the Potsdam statement only through their radio-listening posts. Could the government act on the basis of such unofficial information?

The delay in announcing acceptance of the Allied terms was not expected to be long, but meanwhile the Prime Minister, Kantaro Suzuki, was next day to meet Japanese newspapermen, who would undoubtedly question him about the proclamation. It was decided that Suzuki would say merely that the cabinet had reached no decision on the Allied demands.

When Premier Suzuki confronted the Press on 28th July he said that the cabinet intended to continue its policy of *mokusatsu*. This word not only has no precise counterpart in English but is

ambiguous even in Japanese. It can mean either to ignore or to refrain from comment.

Unfortunately the translators at the Domei News Agency could not know which meaning Suzuki had in mind. Hastily translating the Prime Minister's statement into English, they chose the wrong one. From Radio Tokyo the news crackled to the Allied world that the Suzuki cabinet had decided to "ignore" the Potsdam ultimatum.

The immediate significance given to the broadcast—outside Japan—is clear from the headline in *The Times* on 28th July 1945: "Tokyo to Ignore Allied Terms—Determination to Fight on."

The rest is history. In the face of this rejection the Allies could only demonstrate that the ultimatum had meant exactly what it said. For such a purpose the atomic bomb was an eminently suitable weapon.

Why did the Japanese Government allow the *mokusatsu* error to stand uncorrected? Why was there no challenge of a mistake of such disastrous consequence? Here we enter the realm of conjecture.

The army at that time was arresting "peace-mongers." High office was no protection against seizure by the military fanatics who lashed out at all opposing them. It had taken months of undercover work for the peace faction to bring itself to the peak of power which it held at the time of the important cabinet meeting on 27th July. The situation hung in precarious balance, with the brash officers of the army and navy barely under control.

Then Premier Suzuki and the Domei News Agency, by appearing to fling a challenge to the Allied world, restored the balance of power to the militarists. Japan's peacemakers had to remain silent to save their lives.

The atomic attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki were the result, and they sent the Russians pouring into Manchuria. Their advance swirled onward ten days after the Japanese surrender. When the dust of battle settled, Russia had mightily strengthened her position in the Far East.

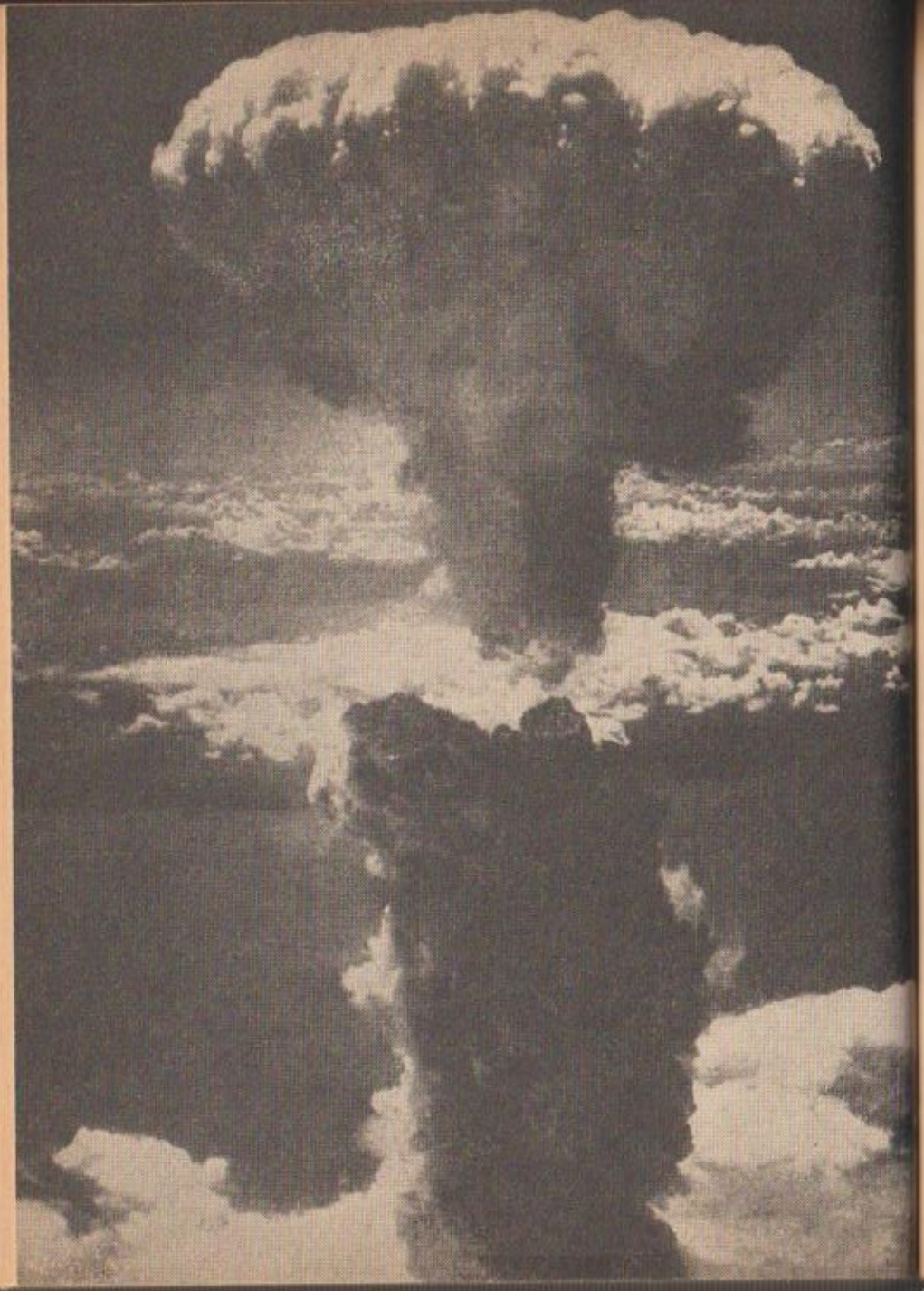
Condensed from Harper's Magazine

No High Ground

A condensation of the book

By Fletcher Knebel and Charles Bailey

The holocaust of Hiroshima changed the course of history: it ended the war but began an era of tension more fearful than any previously known. Who made the agonizing decision to drop the bomb? How was it carried out? This enthralling book is the story of the first nuclear weapon to be used in war



No High Ground

In a radish field outside Tokyo, a crew of expert radio operators from the Japanese Navy kept a round-the-clock watch over a room jammed with 181 powerful radio receivers. Members of the Yamatoda Signal Corps, they were responsible for detecting and recording all radio signals emanating from US transmitters. Now, early in the morning of 6th August 1945, the men working the night shift picked up a call sign they had first heard almost three weeks earlier.

The monitors had located it on Tinian Island, 2,000 miles south in the Pacific, and as it was heard daily during late July they had tagged it "New Task Company" for quick reference. The cryptographers in Tokyo had been unable to break the cipher, but the Japanese monitors had come to recognize it instantly, as trained operators will, by the individual touch of the American signaller's hand on his Morse key.

Now the signal came out of the air again. To the Japanese, it was merely one more item to be logged and reported. They did not know that the "New Task Company" was the highly secret 509th Bomb Group, whose ultimate mission would be to end the war by dropping the first atomic bomb.

Meanwhile, men in Pearl Harbour, Guam and Manila were putting the final touches to a plan called Olympic. This was to be the first assault on Japan, and was intended to capture the southern

portion of Kyushu so that its airfields and harbours could be used to support a final thrust at Tokyo a few months later.

Olympic was on its way; the details set down in over 400 single-spaced pages of Top Secret Operations. Forty-two aircraft-carriers would take part to provide air support; twenty-four battleships would be there for bombardment; 212 destroyers and 183 destroyer escorts would screen the fleet and provide close fire support for the assault troops. Six divisions of infantry would go ashore on D-Day, with three more following on D-plus-two. Four more divisions would be held in reserve. In all, three-quarters of a million men would be involved.

There was a plan for getting men on to the beaches and for taking them off. The navy was to supply ships for evacuating 30,000 wounded in the first thirty days. Hospitals in the Philippines, the Marianas and Okinawa were to have 54,000 beds ready. Twelve hospital ships would be off-shore when the first wave landed. At each beach-head, there would be a landing-craft loaded with blood for transfusions.

The intelligence appendix to the plan was only a preliminary one that would be revised as D-Day approached. But there was information enough in this first estimate:

> Present information of enemy beach defences on southern Kyushu is meagre, but it is known that top priority has been given to preparations for the defence. Recent intelligence indicates considerable activity in the construction of heavy artillery positions. It is probable that fixed defences cover all the proposed landing beaches, and minefields have been laid.
>
> The plains surrounding the landing beaches are backed by rugged hills which are being heavily fortified by the enemy. Well-developed cave defences and tactics of the type encountered in Okinawa will very likely be met throughout the area . . . .

One out of every three of the Allied soldiers engaged in the fight for Okinawa was now dead, wounded or missing.

THERE HAD been attempts at negotiation, but on 6th August 1945 time had run out. The Japanese Cabinet hoped to persuade Russia, still neutral in the Pacific war, to act as intermediary in arranging a peace agreement. The Japanese Foreign Minister, Shigenori Togo, had already ordered Naotake Sato, his ambassador in Moscow, to raise the subject with the Soviet Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, and to seek permission for a special Imperial envoy to come to the Russian capital.

Sato was a trained and seasoned career diplomat. From the embassy in Moscow he could clearly see the hopelessness of his country's position. On 1st July, he had advised his government to end the war in any way possible. Bluntly he pointed out that Japan, now alone and friendless, could look to no one for help or sympathy. Acceptance of any terms—including even unconditional surrender—seemed to Sato the only way to preserve the Emperor and the structure of the nation.

Sato's advice was sound, as both Togo and Prime Minister Kantaro Suzuki knew very well. But they also knew what Sato, long absent from home, could not know: a desperate behind-the-scenes struggle was taking place in Japan.

From the day he took office in April 1945, Suzuki had been trying to arrange an end to the war. In this effort he had the backing of two other members of the Supreme War Council, the "inner Cabinet" that really ran the nation. They were Togo and the Navy Minister, Yonai. But the War Minister, Anami, and the chiefs of the army and navy general staffs wanted to fight on. There was thus a three-to-three deadlock in the Council.

Emperor Hirohito wanted to end the war, and had in fact been quietly sounding out the nation's senior statesmen about it as early as February. But the Emperor, though deified by his subjects, had in fact no solid political power. He could exert influence on individual leaders, but he could not dictate policy to the Council.

On 18th June a small break occurred in this stalemate: the Council agreed to propose, through neutral nations, that an effort

be made to negotiate a peace. This could hardly be called a decision to surrender, but it was a beginning.

On that same day, in Washington, President Truman's inner council of war advisers also held a meeting, but with quite a different aim. At its end, the President approved Olympic. The invasion of the Japanese homeland was scheduled for November.

War, however, was not the only item on Harry Truman's agenda for 18th June. In the United States as in Japan, the search for peace was under way even as both sides braced themselves for the final struggle. That day Joseph Grew, Under-secretary of State, saw the President privately. He urged Truman to give Japan a chance to keep its Emperor if it capitulated, arguing that such an offer could greatly facilitate the surrender.

Grew suggested that the President should issue a statement calling for Japanese surrender, but holding out the possibility that the Emperor might be allowed to remain in power. Truman told Grew that he liked the idea, but wanted to hold it up until he could talk to the Allies at Potsdam. He asked Grew to put the matter on the Big Three agenda.

Meanwhile, in Japan, things were moving at last. The day after the Supreme Council's reversal on 18th June, Togo asked ex-Premier Koki Hirota to see the Soviet Ambassador, Jacob Malik, in an effort to persuade Russia to act as broker in peace talks. Twice within a week, on 24th and 29th June, Hirota saw Malik. He got no encouragement from the taciturn Russian; when he sought a third talk, he was told that the Ambassador was ill.

The clock was running faster now. The Suzuki government did not know how little time was left. In Potsdam on 24th July, the US Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, conferred with Truman for fifteen minutes. He had heard, from James Byrnes, Secretary of State, that it had been decided not to mention the Emperor specifically in the ultimatum which had been approved by Churchill and Truman. The declaration would not go beyond a statement that the final form of government in Japan was to be left to the Japanese.

One day later, on 25th July, in the most momentous decision he had to make as President, Harry Truman approved an order to use the atomic bomb if the Japanese should refuse the Potsdam ultimatum. That order was put into writing in Washington, then flown across the Pacific to Tinian Island.

On 26th July, the United States and Britain, with China as a co-signatory and Soviet Russia an approving onlooker, issued the Potsdam Declaration.

There was instant concern in Japan, as Stimson and Grew had warned that there would be. The ultimatum made no mention of the future status of the Emperor. The Supreme War Council and the Cabinet could not accept it as written. The Cabinet, after long discussion, decided not to answer but to disregard or *mokusatsu* (literally, "kill with silence") the ultimatum.*

Truman received this advice shortly after he had been told by Stalin that the Japanese proposals for mediation were still considered by the Russians as "too vague" for consideration. Stalin's attitude, combined with the report that Japan had decided to ignore the Potsdam ultimatum, left the President convinced that he now had no choice but to let the order he had started towards Tinian on 25th July stand as written. And on that tiny island events were already in motion which were to sweep away all subtleties of diplomacy and politics in a single overwhelming blow.

The steps which led to these events began six years earlier.

IN JANUARY 1939, the newspapers carried the news that German scientists had succeeded in splitting the atom. To the initiate it was obvious that Hitler might one day have a weapon of terrible proportions. Leo Szilard, a brilliant Hungarian who had fled from German laboratories with the rise of Hitler, went with a fellow Hungarian physicist to see Albert Einstein at his Long Island summer home. Representing a group of scientists, the two hoped to persuade Einstein to warn President Roosevelt of atomic progress

* See "Was This the Deadliest Error of Our Time?" p. 684

in Germany. Einstein was not abreast of the latest atomic developments, but his help was vital, not only for its impact on the President but because of his friendship with the Belgian royal family. (The Belgian Congo was at that time the chief source of uranium ore.) He agreed to sign a letter to Roosevelt. The two Hungarians then enlisted New York financier Alexander Sachs, who was an unofficial adviser to the President, to deliver the letter in person.

Sachs took the letter to the White House in October 1939, just a few weeks after Hitler had plunged Europe into war. President Roosevelt was obviously impressed, but seemed reluctant to add a major undertaking to the score of new defence projects just started. Having wangled an invitation to breakfast at the White House the next morning, Sachs spent a sleepless night at his hotel. How could he bait and trap the President's imagination?

FDR was alone at breakfast in the second-floor study of the White House when Sachs called. "What bright idea do you have this morning?" Roosevelt asked cheerily.

"Just a story," Sachs replied. He told the President about one of Napoleon Bonaparte's missed opportunities. Hungering to conquer Britain, Napoleon was frustrated by the erratic Channel tides, which blocked an invasion by French sailing vessels. The American inventor, Robert Fulton, proposed that France should construct steamboats which could negotiate the Channel with ease. But Napoleon rudely brushed aside the idea as being visionary.

How, asked Sachs, might the history of Europe have been changed if Napoleon had heeded Robert Fulton? And in the world of 1939, who would first sponsor the atom scientists as they sought to pioneer a weapon of untold force?

As the President listened, the big Roosevelt grin creased his face. He summoned Brigadier-General Edwin "Pa" Watson, who served as a secretary, and handed him the relevant data. "Pa," he said, "this requires action."

For two years action was sluggish. Meanwhile Hitler was conquering Europe, and Japan's armies were rolling into Indo-China.

BUT BY the end of the summer of 1942 the Manhattan District Engineers, as the bomb's builders were called, had been given top priority. Brigadier-General Leslie Groves, a forty-six-year-old engineer, took command of the operation that September and set out—without known tools, blueprints or materials—to transform an invisible compound of equations, theory and scientific faith into a practical military weapon.

To do it, Groves enlisted industrial magnates, snubbed Congress, trusted no one, and coaxed incredible sums of money from the US Treasury. In time Groves became almost more controversial than the bomb the physicists designed for him. He had, said an admirer, "the most impressive ego since Napoleon."

The scale of Manhattan's operations was staggering. Since nobody knew which of three different methods of separating U-235 was best, all three were initiated. All were costly and all developed two new problems for every solution. Although less than 100 pounds of fissionable material was produced for the three bombs ready by the summer of 1945, at its peak the payroll for the project and for its allied operations included 539,000 people.

When one atomic plant required 15,000 tons of silver for use in electromagnetic coils, Manhattan's production chief asked the Under Secretary of the Treasury, Daniel Bell, if he could supply it.

"My God, man," Bell replied, "you don't talk about silver in *tons*. You speak of it in *ounces!*" Nevertheless, the plant got the silver, which it gave back to government vaults after the war.

The Manhattan District became the melting pot of science. Physicists from Britain's atomic programme joined such home-grown zealots of the new physics as J. Robert Oppenheimer and mingled with refugee scientists from Italy, Germany and Hungary. Ph.D.'s outnumbered the clerical help in some departments and Nobel Prize-winners marched as privates in the ranks.

Within months of its establishment, Manhattan achieved an historic triumph. On 2nd December 1942, in Chicago, its scientists produced man's first controlled chain reaction. Their apparatus was

crude by current standards, but before darkness fell that day the physicists knew that the fission process they had created would some day be placed in a weapon of untold power.

Still, there were stubborn practical problems. The scientists calculated that one pound of U-235 (about the size of a golf ball) would release energy equivalent to about 9,000 tons of TNT. But a single pound of this bomb material by itself was too small to sustain a chain reaction. There had to be a certain amount, the so-called "critical mass" (its quantity was as yet unknown) before an explosion could develop. And the scientists had to keep the components of this mass separated so that it would be uncritical until the exact moment for firing.

To solve these problems, the Manhattan Project built a bomb laboratory on an isolated piece of desert near Los Alamos, New Mexico. Oppenheimer was appointed scientific director.

MEANWHILE General Groves was already nursing another project in another desert. To ensure that the as yet non-existent A-bomb could actually be delivered to enemy targets, 1,500 officers and men were gathered into the singular 509th Composite Group, the only complete "do-it-yourself" unit in the US Air Force. The 509th was given everything it needed for fighting and survival —transport, weapons, food, maintenance and aircraft. And its men were all hand-picked.

For the top job, Colonel Paul Tibbets was chosen. A handsome twenty-nine-year-old airman with wavy black hair, heavy eyebrows and somewhat sad eyes, Tibbets appeared to be quietly dependable. He had been an ace bomber pilot in Europe.

Within an hour of receiving his appointment, Tibbets felt as though he had been set down on another planet. He was instructed in the mysteries of the split atom, told what was hoped from it militarily, and learned that if an A-bomb were ever produced, he himself might pilot the plane that dropped the first one. He was also to take over the task of organizing the flying nucleus of the

509th Group, and was told to pick out a training field to his liking.

When Tibbets set out in a B-29 to find one, his first stop was at Wendover, Utah. He looked no farther. Wendover was a barren desert whose broad, treeless, flat land and bright skies made it ideal for the unorthodox operations the new Group would practise.

From the outset, the 509th was different. Tibbets enjoined the top officers to secrecy without informing them what it was they weren't supposed to reveal. Flight operations were unlike anything ever seen by airmen. Bombing practice was constant from 30,000 feet, and each plane always dropped only one 10,000-pound bomb. Relentless emphasis was placed on visual bombing. This puzzled experienced bomb-aimers, as clear days for visual bombing had been rare over Europe and would probably be rarer over Japan.

The reasons were plain to those initiated in Manhattan secrets. The practice with single bombs simulated the eventual atomic flight when only one precious bomb would be in the bomb-bay. On that occasion the crew simply could not afford to miss the target; and bombing by radar could not be trusted.

After dropping their dummy bombs, the pilots practised a most unorthodox manoeuvre. In order to be clear of the blast and to avoid the ensuing shock waves, scientists calculated that any plane dropping the atomic bomb should be at least eight miles away when it exploded, forty-three seconds later. Hence the pilots made sharp, 158-degree turns and nosed their planes down to gain speed. To make the planes themselves as light as possible, they were stripped of all armament except for the machine-guns in the tail.

IN MANHATTAN DISTRICT the frantic effort to create an A-bomb never once flagged. By 30th December 1944 things were going so well that General Groves felt able to announce his timetable. "The first bomb should be ready about 1st August 1945," he wrote in a memorandum to the Chief of Staff, General George Marshall. Since this would be too late to use the bomb against Germany, where the Nazi régime was already tottering towards

collapse, Groves suggested that the Pacific naval command should be alerted; the 509th would need a base from which it could reach Japan. General Marshall, Stimson and Roosevelt approved.

Tinian, in the Marianas, was selected as the base for the 509th. A level limestone platform, about six miles wide in the middle and thirteen miles long, the island made an ideal stationary aircraft-carrier, and its very smallness adapted it to secrecy. It had a network of good roads built by the Japanese, and its four-runway airfield had been planned as the world's biggest bomber base.

On 5th April the US War Department approved the code name Centreboard for the mission of delivering the atomic bomb on Japan (the name being supplied by an officer who had no idea what the mission was). And late in April Tibbets's men, who now had fifteen stripped-down B-29's, began moving overseas.

Almost at once the 509th became the island curiosity. Tokyo Rose—Japan's "Lord Haw-Haw"—punctual if not fully enlightened, greeted its arrival by radio from Japan, but that was the last "official" news the other B-29 crews had of this strange unit. The 509th's own military police promptly strung barbed wire round certain areas and set up machine-guns to guard them. Even a general had to show a pass to get in.

But it was chiefly the 509th's flying that caused raised eyebrows among other B-29 crews. Never did Tibbets and his men participate in the mass raids, or share the sight of empty bunks afterwards. Instead they flew solo missions, occasionally bombing a Japanese-held island, or making the round trip of very nearly 3,000 miles to Japanese cities just to drop one bomb each—or so the rumour ran.

Soon the *élite* and privileged status of the 509th became the standard grouse of the 20th Air Force in the Marianas.

GENERAL GROVES'S time-table for the completed A-bomb—1st August—proved to be marvellously exact. The place chosen for testing it was an arid expanse of land in New Mexico, fifty miles from Alamogordo; the time 5.30 a.m. on 16th July.

On that date the atomic age opened with a flash that lit up the skies 250 miles away and brightened Ground Zero with the dazzle of many suns. Men who looked directly at it, against orders, were temporarily blinded. A giant sphere of fire, laced with hues of deep purple and orange, spread out for a mile. The earth shook. A blast of hot air rolled out in a wave. The hundred-foot tower on which the bomb rested was vaporized. At observation posts ten miles out, the roar of the instant chain reaction came many seconds later. A column of white smoke shot straight up, then flowered into a mushroom that finally climbed to 40,000 feet. All over the US South-west, inhabitants marked the clap of thunder and the strange way the sun seemed to rise and then go back down again.

A Press release, which had been prepared in advance and gave a fake explanation for the unearthly eruption, was issued:

> An ammunition magazine exploded early today in a remote area of the Alamogordo Air Base reservation, producing a brilliant flash and blast which were reported to have been observed as far away as Gallup, 235 miles north-west.

The scientists were awestruck at their triumph. "The test was successful beyond our most optimistic hopes," General Groves wrote in a confidential memorandum which was delivered by air courier to Potsdam. The bomb had generated energy estimated as equalling 20,000 tons of TNT.

THE DECISION to drop atomic bombs on Japan was made with great reluctance after months of soul-searching. From the start some scientists had hoped that the Manhattan research would prove futile and, when the A-bomb was nevertheless produced, many of them wrote impassioned memorandums and got up petitions asking that it should not be used.

Among war leaders, General Eisenhower, briefed on the subject at Potsdam, hoped that the bomb would not have to be used against Japan; he hated to see the United States as the first to employ a

weapon with such incredible potential for death and destruction.

But most military chiefs believed that the new bomb presented no ethical questions not found in TNT or the incendiary bomb. For large-scale bombardments of civilians had unfortunately become commonplace. (On the night of 9th March, for example, sixteen square miles of Tokyo had been set ablaze by incendiaries, and 78,000 people were killed.)

Soon after Roosevelt's death in April 1945, Stimson urged the new President, Harry Truman, to appoint a committee on certain phases of atomic policy. Truman assented. The Interim Committee, as it was called, consisted of eight men, and had a four-man panel of scientific advisers. Most of the committee's deliberations concerned the control and post-war future of atomic energy, but the question of the bomb's use against Japan was also discussed.

One scientist suggested demonstrating the bomb before foreign observers and thus persuading the Japanese war lords to surrender. But the more the committee considered this course, the more questions it raised. What if the bomb proved to be a dud? What if the Japanese refused to send representatives? If the Japanese refused to surrender after witnessing the demonstration, wouldn't the chances of the atomic bomber being shot down multiply?

Another suggestion offered was to warn the Japanese explicitly of the murderous scope of the new bomb and then drop it only if surrender was not forthcoming within a stated number of days. But what if Japan retaliated by moving Allied prisoners of war into key areas, and then dared the United States to go ahead? Even if this didn't occur, wouldn't all the shock value be lost and might not fighters be sent aloft to intercept the atomic mission?

In the end all questions merged into one—would the atomic bomb have a good chance of ending the war quickly? The answer appeared to be yes, but the four-man scientific panel was asked to investigate the slim possibility that some type of demonstration could be arranged that would make the scheduled invasion of Japan unnecessary, and thus save both Allied and Japanese lives.

After two weeks of exploration the panel reported negatively: "We can see no alternative to direct military use."

The committee's report to the White House recommended that the bomb should be dropped on Japan as soon as possible, without specific warning. Truman had already come to the same conclusion independently, and it was now settled definitely that the bomb would be used against the Japanese unless they surrendered first.

To make the maximum impact, it was determined to explode the atomic weapon over a city hitherto relatively untouched by bombing. There were few such cities left in Japan by now, and the list submitted for consideration contained only four names: Kyoto, Kokura, Niigata and Hiroshima.

Slowly the list was shortened. On 2nd August a top-secret order was issued at Guam, stating that the bomb was to be dropped on 6th August. Primary target: *Hiroshima urban industrial area.*

HIROSHIMA was known throughout Japan as a place where exceptionally beautiful willow trees grew. This big port and manufacturing city, now marked for death, had in three and a half years of war felt the concussion of only twelve enemy bombs. Nevertheless, the city's people knew very well that the war was going badly for their country. They were aware of it every time they sat down to eat, every time they walked along the streets.

Down by the docks, from which almost every Nipponese soldier who went to the south-western Pacific fighting area had sailed, a death-like quiet hung over the big embarkation facilities. The *Gaisenkan*, "Hall of Triumphal Return," where troops had listened intently to final instructions and exhortations to gallantry, was now quiet and empty.

Where the city in earlier years had been filled to overflowing with as many as 100,000 troops *en route* to the front, it now held only one division, and that was preparing for defence, not attack. Including support troops, there were now about 24,000 soldiers in Hiroshima. The once-busy harbour was almost dead. American

planes had dropped so many mines into the waters of the Inland Sea that no shipping came to Hiroshima any more.

There were no more civic celebrations of the sort that provided the rousing send-off for the "Ever-Victorious 5th Army" in 1942. When it had sailed south to capture Singapore, thousands of Hiroshima citizens had lined the docks to shout "*Banzai!*"

Under military orders, the citizens of Hiroshima destroyed great chunks of their city. Almost 70,000 dwellings were demolished to make three broad fire-breaks. As a result of the destruction, over 90,000 of the city's peak wartime population of 380,000 had been ordered to leave in five mass evacuations.

The people who were left in Hiroshima were busy. Thousands had been mobilized in "neighbourhood associations" to tear down houses—sometimes including their own—in the fire-break programme. The factories, warehouses and railway yards of Hiroshima were running hard, trying to turn out supplies and equipment for an army that would soon have to meet a terrible onslaught on the home islands. But their activity masked a deeper economic and military hopelessness that was painfully apparent to the top planners, if not to the man in the street.

The average citizen of Hiroshima might know only that his rice ration was smaller, or that the corner grocer's had gone out of business because it had little to sell. But the Japanese Cabinet knew more. An official study in June had predicted that minimum requirements for rice to support the people on a subsistence-only basis would outrun supplies by fourteen million tons in 1945. The Cabinet knew, too, that the armed forces had been desperately short of fuel for almost a year. As early as the autumn of 1944 the navy was so rationed that some of the warships lost in the Philippine sea battles might not have been able to regain their home ports even if they had escaped the bombs and torpedoes.

The Japanese Army was making shell cases out of dull-grey substitute metals, for there was no more brass. Some military units were being issued with bamboo spears. These were also to be the

principal weapons of the National Volunteer Fighting Corps, a sort of last-ditch home guard into which all civilian Japanese men and boys would soon be mobilized.

Every foot of coastline was being prepared for defence; but in most cases this meant only barbed wire (there was little cement for fortifications), machine-guns (there were almost no artillery pieces available) and caves in the hills (it was obvious that the invaders could not be kept off the beaches). The Japanese Navy, not only short of fuel but also decimated by Allied guns and bombs, had finally adopted the *Kamikaze* tactics of the air force. In July, 700 small craft, loaded with explosives and intended for one-way voyages only, were being prepared in southern Japanese harbours against the inevitable day when the invasion fleet would appear.

THE 6TH AUGUST 1945 was little different in Hiroshima from previous Mondays in that year of shortages, defeats, evacuations and forced labour. Women in almost every house were cooking breakfast over the little charcoal burners that served Japanese homes as combined stoves and heaters. Working parties were forming up or just starting their tasks. Among them were a number from outside the city, groups sent into Hiroshima to speed up the demolition and fire-break work.

Busy with morning routines, most people in Hiroshima paid little attention to the air raid alert that sounded at nine minutes past seven. Those who looked up at the faint drone of engines found, if their eyes were sharp, a single B-29, flying very high. Probably it was a weather plane of the kind that often flew over in the morning. It crossed the city twice and then, at 7.25, flew out to sea. The warning system sounded the all-clear at 7.31.

THE SINGLE B-29 *was* a weather plane. Its name was *Straight Flush*. The order which sent it over Hiroshima was designated as Special Bombing Mission No. 13. Seven of Tibbets's fifteen B-29's had been allocated to this mission.

On 4th August, the seven crews were summoned to the briefing hut, and Captain William Parsons, of the US Navy, who was to arm the A-bomb, showed films of the atomic test at Alamogordo. After viewing its chilling and awful majesty, every man there knew why pilots had practised steep breakaway turns at high altitude.

Parsons warned pilots not to fly through the mushroom cloud because of the danger of radioactivity. He stated frankly that no one could be sure what would happen; even exploding at the planned altitude of 1,850 feet, the bomb might crack the crust of the earth.

The next day, 5th August, was a Sunday, hot with a glaring sun. All over the island of Tinian, men briefly bowed their heads to God; but the business of war did not pause long for worship. At the 509th's bomb assembly hut, physicists, ordnance men, military police, security agents and air force brass-hats gathered to peer respectfully at the A-bomb as it swung from its chain hoist.

About fourteen feet long and five feet in diameter, the bomb weighed just under four and a half tons. The fissionable core was far less than one-half of one per cent of this weight, and was tucked away in the interior, as Oppenheimer once remarked, "like a small diamond in an enormous wad of cotton wool." A proximity fuse would be set for 1,850 feet. When the falling projectile reached this altitude the fuse would detonate an explosive charge which would shoot a small chunk of U-235 forward at a speed of 5,000 feet per second to collide with a larger chunk of U-235, a cup-shaped piece in the nose. At that instant the atomic explosion would occur.

Two special couriers had brought that vital, cup-shaped target to Tinian in a lead cylinder about the size of a ten-gallon oil drum. Their orders had been explicit: under no circumstances were they to save lives before the U-235. If the ship sank—it was the heavy cruiser *Indianapolis*—the U-235 was to have the first motor launch or raft. From San Francisco the cruiser had raced to Tinian, pausing for only a few hours at Pearl Harbour to refuel, and had delivered the U-235 to the island on 26th July. (Four days later the ill-fated *Indianapolis* was torpedoed and sunk.)

Three smaller chunks of U-235 had also been sent to Tinian by air, each on a separate plane, and each accompanied by a Manhattan security agent.

At about midnight the chaplain of the 509th said a brief prayer for the mission. Then the seven crews had breakfast, and at 1.37 a.m. the three weather planes took off for Hiroshima, Kokura and Nagasaki respectively. (If Hiroshima was obscured by fog, the other two cities were alternative targets.)

A little over an hour later—the time was 2.45 a.m., 6th August—Tibbets's heavily-loaded plane, the *Enola Gay* (named after his mother), rolled down the coral runway and, with only yards to spare, left the ground. It was followed at two-minute intervals by two other B-29's—one to measure blast and radiation, one to take photographs. A third B-29, which would stand by to transfer the bomb at Iwo Jima and carry on if the *Enola Gay* developed trouble, had left earlier. Special Bombing Mission No. 13 was on the way.

As it climbed above the Pacific with a sharp upward thrust, the *Enola Gay* shuddered with the strain. The crew breathed more easily when Tibbets had gained sufficient altitude to swing left and seek his compass heading for Iwo, 622 miles to the north.

At 4,000 feet Tibbets throttled back to cruising speed. Parsons knocked out a cold pipe, lowered himself into the forward bomb-bay and began completing the final assembly. The entire job took only about twenty-five minutes.

Apart from its revolutionary nuclear character, the weapon, now fully armed and ready to go, was a maze of electronic ingenuity. When it was dropped, a series of intricate timers would shut off for the first fifteen seconds, so that the device could not possibly detonate during that interval.

Another cluster of instruments would prevent the bomb from exploding above 10,000 feet. After fifteen seconds of fall, barometric gauges would alert the radio proximity fuses, set to trigger the explosion at 1,850 feet. There were four of these fuses, at least

two of which had to agree on the exact altitude before detonation could occur. All these complex devices had to operate within the estimated forty-three seconds from the moment of bomb release to the instant of explosion.

To ensure against mechanical failure, a "black box" aboard the plane monitored the bomb's electrical circuits. It was checked every half-hour during the flight, and every instrument on its panel had to read correctly or the bomb would have to be brought back to Tinian undropped.

At 4.55, well after daylight, the *Enola Gay* made her rendezvous over Iwo Jima with the two following B-29's which were to accompany her. Then in wide V-formation, maintaining the strictest radio silence, the three B-29's headed north-west towards the Japanese island of Shikoku.

Presently Tibbets called all hands over the intercom. From now on, he said, every man must be ready at his station. And when they reached the coast of Japan, all their intercom conversation would be recorded. "This is for history," said Tibbets. "So watch your language. We're carrying the first atomic bomb."

It was the first time most of the crew had heard the phrase.

At 7.09, far ahead of them, the weather plane *Straight Flush* approached the outskirts of Hiroshima. A solid undercast covered Japan as far as the eye could see. Minutes later, however, a view of the entire city opened up. At the point where the *Enola Gay* was scheduled to release its cargo, the city was so clear below that the crew could see patches of green grass. A ten-mile hole in an otherwise solid cloud bank marked Hiroshima, as though fate had driven a spike into the city's heart.

At 7.25 the *Straight Flush* radioed its report, which ended, "Advice: Bomb primary." When Tibbets had decoded the message, he turned to his navigator, standing at his elbow.

"It's Hiroshima," he said.

At 7.50 the *Enola Gay* passed over the edge of Shikoku Island. The crew pulled on their flak suits. The monitoring console showed

all the bomb's electrical circuits to be in perfect order, with no evidence of Japanese jamming.

By 8.09 the outlines of Hiroshima were in view through the opening in the clouds. "We are about to start the bomb run," Tibbets announced on the intercom. "As soon as you hear the signal, pull on your goggles and keep them on until after the flash." All the crew had specially manufactured goggles in which quinine crystals would admit only purple through the lenses.

As the *Enola Gay* flew west at 31,600 feet, Hiroshima lay open and bare beneath the plane. Through the bombsight it unrolled in a pattern familiar to bomb-aimer Major Tom Ferebee. It could have been the target photograph he had studied a dozen times. The aiming point, the centre of a main bridge over the Ota River's widest branch, moved to the cross-hairs.

"I've got it," Ferebee said, and started the automatic synchronization for the final minute of the bomb run. Forty-five seconds later he turned on the radio tone signal which meant that in fifteen seconds the bomb would drop.

At 8.15 plus fifteen seconds the bomb-bay doors sprang open and the aircraft lurched up, suddenly four and a half tons lighter. The head of every man in her snapped with the sudden jolt. Tibbets nosed the plane over to the right in a sixty-degree bank and tight turn of 158 degrees. The fuselage screamed with the violence of the manoeuvre.

Hastily instructing Bob Caron, the tail gunner, to tell everyone what he saw, Tibbets began measuring the forty-three seconds mentally. Each moment now seemed endless. "See anything yet?" Tibbets asked Caron after about thirty-five seconds had elapsed.

"No, sir."

First-Lieutenant Morris Jeppson, in charge of the console which had been monitoring the bomb's circuits, had started his own count and was now nearing the end: forty . . . forty-one . . . forty-two . . . Jeppson stopped the count.

The thought flashed through his brain. "It's a dud."

At that instant, the world went purple in a flash before Bob Caron's eyes.

His eyelids shut involuntarily behind his goggles. I must be blinded, he thought—even when he had looked directly at the sun through the goggles a moment earlier it had shown only faintly. He was too stunned at first to report on the intercom.

Caron had been looking at an explosion which, in a slice of time too small for any stop-watch to measure, had become a ball of fire 1,800 feet across, with a temperature at its centre of 100 million degrees. Hiroshima was already a missing city.

THE SOUNDING of the all-clear signal in Hiroshima at 7.31 a.m. on 6th August made little change in the tempo of the city. Most people had been too busy, or too lazy, to pay much attention to the alert. The departure of the single, high-flying B-29—the weather plane—caused no more stir than its arrival over the city twenty-two minutes earlier.

At 8.15, the few people in Hiroshima who caught sight of a new small formation of planes noticed that three parachutes blossomed from one of them. These had been dropped from the blast- and radiation-measuring plane; they supported instruments to broadcast such measurements. Seeing the parachutes some people cheered, thinking the planes must be in trouble and the crews baling out.

For three-quarters of a minute there was nothing but the parachutes in the clear sky over the city.

Then suddenly, terrifyingly, without a sound, there was no sky left over Hiroshima.

FOR THOSE who survived to recall it, the first instant of the atomic explosion over Hiroshima was pure light, blinding, intense, but of awesome beauty and variety. One witness described a flash that turned from white to pink and then to blue as it rose and blossomed. Others seemed to see "five or six bright colours." Some saw merely "flashes of gold" in a white light that reminded

them—this was perhaps the most common description—of a huge photographic flash bulb exploding over the city.

The sole impression was visual. If there was sound, no one heard it.

Thousands did not see anything either. They were simply incinerated where they stood by the radiant heat that turned central Hiroshima into a gigantic oven. Thousands of others survived for perhaps a second or two, only to be shredded by the scattered window glass that flew before the blast waves, or crushed underneath walls, beams, bricks or other solid objects that stood in the way of the explosion.

Several factors combined to produce more devastation than the nuclear experts had predicted. First, the precision of the drop. Major Ferebee's aim was nearly perfect. Despite the fact that it was released from a fast-moving aircraft over three miles to the east and nearly six miles in the air, the bomb was detonated only a little over 200 yards from the designated aiming point.

Then, the time of the explosion. All over Hiroshima, thousands of charcoal braziers were full of hot coals from the breakfast cooking. Almost every stove, knocked over by the massive blast waves, became a torch to set alight the wood-and-paper houses. Oppenheimer had assumed that most people would be in air raid shelters and had estimated 20,000 casualties. But there had been no specific alert—small formations of planes had flown over the city many times without dropping bombs—and most people were on their way to work. Thus there were more than 70,000 casualties.

The initial flash spawned a succession of calamities.

First came heat. It lasted only an instant but was so intense that it melted roof tiles, fused the quartz crystals in granite blocks, charred the exposed sides of telephone poles for almost two miles, and destroyed near-by humans so thoroughly that nothing remained except the outline of their shadows, burnt into asphalt pavements or stone walls.

Ten miles from the city, the mayor of Kabe distinctly felt the heat on his face as he stood in his garden.

In the instant after the atomic bomb hit Hiroshima, the explosion became a ball of fire 1,800 feet across, with a temperature of 100 million degrees at the centre. Hiroshima disappeared. Hardly a building was left standing within an area of five square miles, and there were more than 70,000 casualties

Major Thomas Ferebee, bomb-aimer

Colonel Paul Tibbets, pilot

Captain Robert Lewis, co-pilot

"Conflicting emotions jostled the minds of the airmen over the ruined city. Some were elated that the bomb had worked, and hoped it would end the war. Some simply could not relate what they saw to reality. 'My God,' said Lewis. 'What have we done?' "

At two and a half miles from Ground Zero the heat still burnt human skin.

At a mile and a half, a printed page exposed to the heat rays had the black letters burnt completely out of the white paper.

Hundreds of women had the darker parts of their clothing burnt out while the lighter portions remained unscorched, leaving the skin underneath etched in precise detail with the flowered patterns of their kimonos.

After the heat came the blast, sweeping outward from the fireball with the force of a 500-mile-an-hour wind. Only objects which offered a minimum of surface resistance—handrails on bridges, pipes, lamp-posts—withstood its force. The walls of a few office buildings, which had been specially constructed to resist earthquakes, remained standing. But they enclosed only wreckage, as their roofs were driven to the ground, carrying everything inside down with them.

The blast broke water mains everywhere, so that Hiroshima's surviving firemen—two-thirds of them were immediate casualties—were helpless to cope with the thousands of fires that started within seconds. Between them, blast and fire destroyed almost every single building within an area of about five square miles.

After heat, blast and fire the people of Hiroshima had further ordeals to face.

A few minutes after the explosion, a strange rain began to fall. The raindrops were as big as marbles—and they were black. This frightening phenomenon resulted from the vaporization of moisture in the fireball and condensation in the cloud that spouted up from it. There was not enough of this "black rain" to put out the fires, but enough to heighten the panic of people who were already unnerved by what had hit them.

After the rain came the great "fire wind" which blew back in towards the centre of the catastrophe, increasing in force as the air over Hiroshima grew hotter because of the great fires.

The wind blew so hard that it uprooted huge trees in the parks

where survivors were collecting. It whipped up high waves on the rivers and drowned many who had gone into the water to escape from the heat and flames.

TIBBETS HAD BEEN warned that a shock wave would probably hit the plane about a minute after the bomb exploded. Anticipating this, he pointed the nose upward so as to gain altitude and lose speed—a tactic which aerodynamic experts calculated would lessen the impact.

From the rear turret, Bob Caron soon saw a shimmering line rushing towards the plane. It extended in a long curve like a ripple from a stone tossed into a pond. It was visible because the heavy compression of air was followed by a vacuum in which vapour condensed instantaneously, forming a belt of rising mist.

The shock wave raced at the plane at a speed of twelve miles a minute. Although its probable force had been stressed in briefings, the actual violence of it astounded the crew.

"Flak!" Tibbets yelled involuntarily as it struck. Parsons experienced a similar reaction. It felt as though a large anti-aircraft shell had burst twenty feet from the plane.

"Here comes another one," warned Caron from the rear.

A reflection of the blast from the ground, this second shock wave hit them, then the peril was over. In formation with the two accompanying planes, the *Enola Gay* now flew south along the outskirts of Hiroshima, and for the first time the crew observed what they had done.

Dust boiled up from the entire city and long, swirling grey shafts rushed towards the centre. A column of white smoke, incredibly tidy in form, stood straight up. At the base it was flecked with red and orange and at the top it spilt into an almost perfect mushroom. The stem of the strange cloud-flower reminded one man of an enormous gravestone. Within minutes the cloud mushroom pushed upward almost four miles.

Conflicting emotions jostled the minds of the airmen over the

ruined city. Some were elated that the bomb had worked, and hoped it would end the war. Some were torn between pride and dismay. Some simply could not relate what they saw to reality. Captain Robert Lewis, the co-pilot, was one of the first to speak.

"My God," he said, "what have we done?"

Tibbets ordered an uncoded message to be sent, notifying Tinian that the *Enola Gay* had bombed its primary target visually with good results; no fighters, no flak. Then, as they settled down for the long flight back to Tinian, the report was elaborated in code: "Clear-cut, successful in all respects. Visible effect greater than Trinity (the New Mexico test)."

A MOMENT after 8.16 a.m. the Tokyo control operator of the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation noticed that his telephone line to the radio station in Hiroshima had gone dead. He tried to re-establish his connexion but found that he could not get through.

Twenty minutes later the men in the railway-signal centre in Tokyo realized that the main-line telegraph had stopped working. The break seemed to be just north of Hiroshima. Reports began to come in from stations near Hiroshima that there had been some kind of an explosion in the city. The railway signalmen forwarded the messages to Army General Headquarters.

It was almost ten o'clock when Ryugen Hosokawa, managing editor of the Tokyo newspaper *Asahi*, received a telephone call at his home. It was the office, reporting that Hiroshima had "almost completely collapsed" because of bombing by enemy planes.

At about the same time Major Tosaku Hirano, a staff officer of the 2nd Army Corps, was in General Headquarters in Tokyo. He had come up from Hiroshima a week earlier to report on the status of military supplies in the port city, and had been scheduled to fly back on Sunday. But he had put off his departure and was still in the capital.

Now his telephone rang. It was a call from Central Headquarters in Osaka, an installation under the control of the 2nd Army

Corps in Hiroshima, reporting that its communications to Hiroshima and points west had failed.

Tokyo GHQ tried several times to raise the Hiroshima communications centre, but could not get through. There was no explanation. The succession of reports from the radio network, from the railway signal centre, from *Asahi's* newsroom and from Osaka indicated that something serious had happened, but no one could find out what it was.

Then, shortly after 1 p.m., General Headquarters heard from the 2nd Army Corps. The message was short but stunning: "Hiroshima has been annihilated by one bomb and fires are spreading." This flash came from the army shipping depot on the Hiroshima waterfront, which was outside the blast area.

Reports continued to trickle in. By mid-afternoon, the army knew that only three enemy planes had been over Hiroshima when the bomb exploded. It had been told that two of these did not drop any bombs. In mid-afternoon the managing editors of the five big Tokyo newspapers were called to the Government Information and Intelligence Agency. An army Press officer addressed them.

> We believe that the bomb dropped on Hiroshima is different from an ordinary one. We intend to make some announcement when proper information has been obtained. Until then, run the story in an obscure place in your papers and as one no different from the report of an ordinary air raid.

In other words, the lid was on. The army already had a strong suspicion that the Hiroshima bomb might be an atomic weapon. But anxious to keep the war going so that it could fight a hand-to-hand battle on Japanese soil, the army was determined to withhold the news from the Japanese people as long as it could.

The truth about Hiroshima was soon to be revealed, however. In Saitama prefecture outside Tokyo, Domei, the quasi-governmental news agency, operated a big monitoring station where nearly fifty workers, many of them Nisei girls born in the United

States, listened to American broadcasts. About 1 a.m. on 7th August (noon on the 6th in Washington), Hideo Kinoshita, chief of the monitoring room, was awakened by the Japanese youth who had charge of the operation that night. The boy reported that US stations were all broadcasting a statement by President Truman, describing the weapon dropped on Hiroshima as "an atomic bomb."

Kinoshita listened to the account. Then he quickly called his superior, Saiji Hasegawa. Hasegawa had no idea what an atomic bomb was, but he rushed to his office. When he saw the text transcripts that were beginning to come through from the Saitama monitors, he called Hisatsune Sakomizu, chief secretary of the Cabinet.

Sakomizu quickly phoned Prime Minister Suzuki, with whom he had been working in the effort to arrange a peace settlement. They knew immediately, he said later,

> . . . that if the announcement were true, no country could carry on a war. Without the atomic bomb it would be impossible for any country to defend itself against a nation which had the weapon. The chance had come to end the war. It was not necessary to blame the military side, the manufacturing people, or anyone else—just the atomic bomb. It was a good excuse.

The army generals, however, were unwilling to accept this attitude. They argued that the bomb was not atomic but was merely a huge conventional projectile. They flatly refused Foreign Minister Togo's proposal to take up for immediate consideration the possibility of surrender on the terms of the Potsdam ultimatum, and insisted on keeping the Truman atomic statement from the Japanese people until the army could conduct an investigation at Hiroshima.

The military had already started such a check. Major Hirano, the staff officer from the Hiroshima headquarters, phoned Yoshio Nishina, the nation's leading nuclear scientist. He told Nishina of the Truman claims and asked him to go down to Hiroshima in a liaison plane to investigate the matter. Nishina agreed to make the trip.

It was almost seven in the evening when Hirano's little plane came down over Hiroshima. It was still light, however, so he got the full picture with shocking suddenness:

> As I was a soldier, my eye had been inured to the effects of bombing by that time. But this was a different sight. *There were no roads in the wastes that spread below our eyes:* that was my first impression. In the case of a normal air raid, roads were still visible after it was over. But in Hiroshima, everything was flattened and all roads were covered with debris.

The investigators stepped from their plane and picked their way to the wreckage of 2nd Army Headquarters. Nobody was there. They finally found what was left of the headquarters—a few officers taking cover in a hillside cave. Long before they began the formal investigation next morning, they knew the truth.

In Washington, it was agreed that news of the atomic strike should be released to the general public at once. Correspondents immediately went to work on what they recognized as one of the greatest stories of all time.

The news startled the entire world. For most people, the information was impossible to comprehend. The first official communiqué came from the White House. After briefly describing the nature and power of the weapon, the dispatch continued:

> It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of 26th July was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen.

To speed up Japan's surrender, Washington decided to launch an intensive propaganda campaign, dropping sixteen million leaflets on forty-seven Japanese cities. They also moved up a scheduled second atomic strike from 11th August to 9th August, reasoning that a

swift one-two sequence would convince Japanese leaders that Hiroshima was not some freak of nature.

The second atomic-bomb flight was ill-starred from the start and, in the end, almost nothing about it went right. The bomb was plutonium, the type which had been exploded in New Mexico. (The Hiroshima bomb had been uranium, a type hitherto untested.) The weapon was flown by Major Charles Sweeney in a plane not his own. The primary target, Kokura, was so closed in that three flights over the city failed to disclose the smallest hole. When Sweeney flew on to Nagasaki, the alternative target, it too was hidden by cloud. Commander Ashworth, the weaponeer aboard the plane, ordered a radar drop if necessary, taking it upon himself to countermand Washington's orders because of a shortage of fuel. The entire bomb run was made by radar, and although the bomb-aimer found a hole at the last minute, he missed the aiming point by three miles. Even so the devastation was enormous.

Next day the Japanese Cabinet agreed to send a message through Switzerland accepting the Potsdam ultimatum, on the "understanding" that the Emperor would stay in power. The war was over.

EVEN THEN the question remained to trouble the consciences of men everywhere: had it been right to drop the bomb?

Winston Churchill unhesitatingly favoured its use if it might help in ending the war.

President Truman was blunt in accepting responsibility and defending his action.

"Let there be no mistake about it," he said. "I regarded the bomb as a military weapon and never had any doubt that it should be used."

Admiral Leahy's post-war judgment was bitter. "The use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan. The Japanese were already defeated and ready to surrender because of the blockade and bombing with conventional weapons."

Secretary of War Stimson, who had helped father the Manhattan

project, never swerved in recommending the bomb should be used.

"I see too many stern and heartrending decisions to pretend that war is anything than what it is," he said. "The face of war is the face of death; death is an inevitable part of every order that a wartime leader gives. The decision to use the atomic bomb brought death to over a hundred thousand Japanese. But it was our least abhorrent alternative. It put an end to the war, stopped the fire raids, and ended the ghastly spectre of a clash of great land armies."

Who was right? Truman and Churchill who saw the bomb as a military weapon to end a war? Or Leahy, who believed use of the bomb unnecessary in this case? Or Stimson, who saw war as death itself? Few who knew as much as these four about the situation in 1945 would consider themselves fit to render judgment.

The absolute verdicts came from people who knew less and who felt less keenly the weight of responsibility and authority.

Physicist Luis Alvarez, who flew with the formation that destroyed Hiroshima, found the scientists at Los Alamos "almost neurotic" in their post-mortem opposition to the bomb. But he noted that those who had carried the bomb out to the Pacific, and had thus seen the battle at first hand, seemed far less worried about the morality of using the bomb than did the others.

If the moral implications of the bomb were clouded, the military implications were not. A favourite military maxim had long been "Seize the high ground," for high ground had always meant tactical advantage. Robert Lovett, US Assistant Secretary of War for Air, used the phrase in a message to his old friend General Carl Spaatz. At the time of Japan's defeat, Lovett, unable to leave Washington, wired his congratulations, and this instruction:

I AM STUCK HERE WITH NO IMMEDIATE PROSPECT OF BREAKING LOOSE, SO RELY ON YOU TO SEIZE ME HIGH GROUND.

A few minutes later the tough old airman replied:

PERSONAL. HAVE LOOKED AT PHOTOS OF HIROSHIMA TODAY. THE ATOMIC BOMB DISPOSES OF ALL HIGH GROUND.

Condensed from "No High Ground," published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London

The Longest Day: original full-length version © Cornelius Ryan 1959; *No High Ground*: original full-length version © Fletcher Knebel and Charles W. Bailey II 1960; *The Man with the Miraculous Hands*: original full-length version © Librairie Gallimard 1960, © Hart-Davis 1961; *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*: original full-length version © William L. Shirer 1959, 1960; *Agent Extraordinary*: original full-length version © George Martelli and Michel Hollard 1960.

The photograph of Colonel Britton on page 330 is reproduced by permission of BBC Pictorial Publicity; the newspaper cutting on page 447 is reproduced by permission of *The Times*, and the crossword puzzles on pages 498 and 499 are reproduced by permission of *The Daily Telegraph*. The photograph of Admiral Ohnishi and his poem on page 588 and the top photograph on page 592 are reproduced from the book *Divine Wind* © US Naval Institute, Annapolis, Maryland, 1958 by permission of the Institute; the photograph of Major Moss, Major-General Kreipe and Major Leigh-Fermor on page 646 is reproduced from the book *Ill Met by Moonlight* by permission of George G. Harrap & Co.

The Reader's Digest is indebted to the Imperial War Museum Reference Library for providing most of the remaining photographs and documents reproduced in this book.

SECRETS AND STORIES OF THE WAR

2

THE READER'S DIGEST